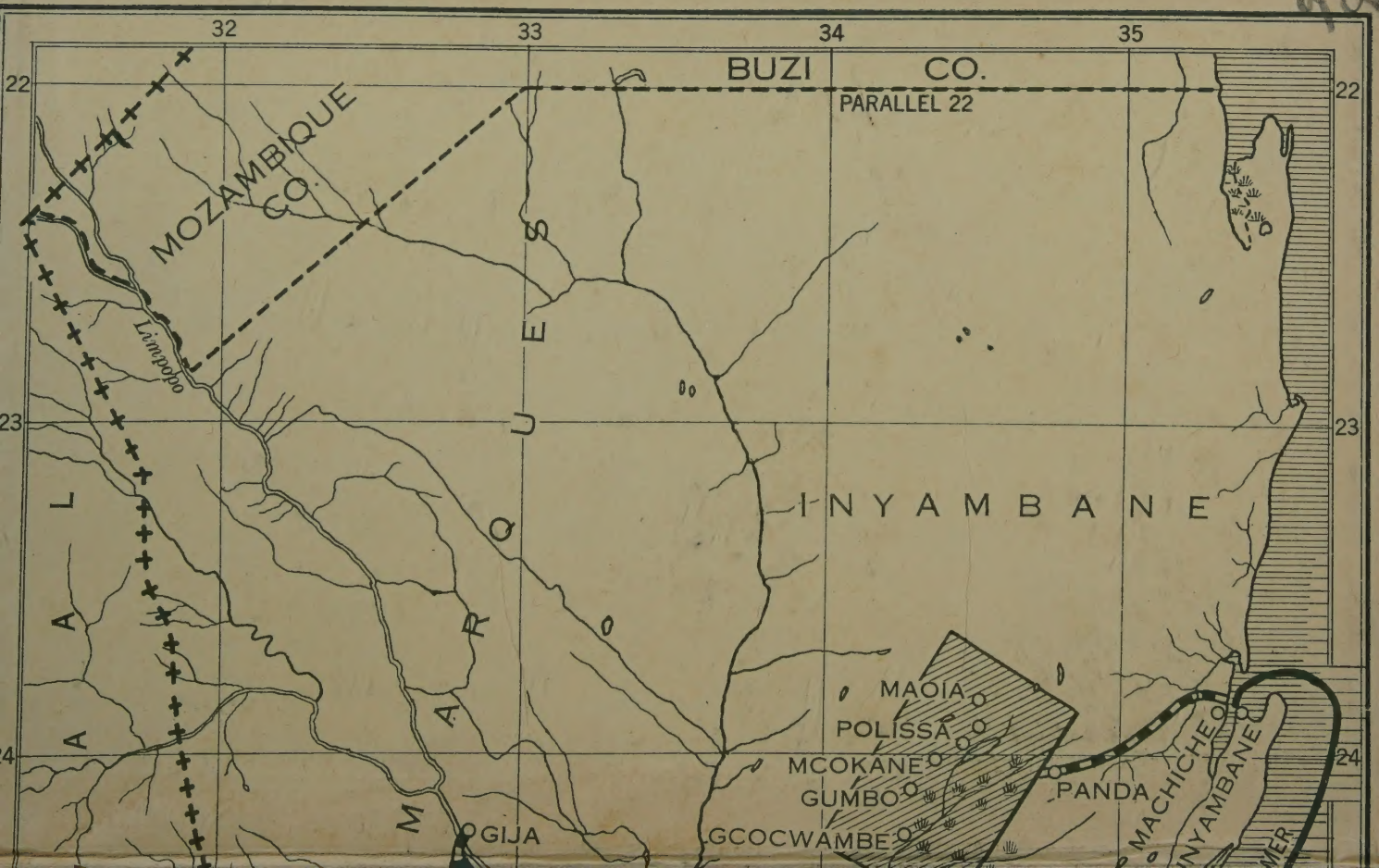
African Hunting Among the Thongas

George Agnew Chamberlain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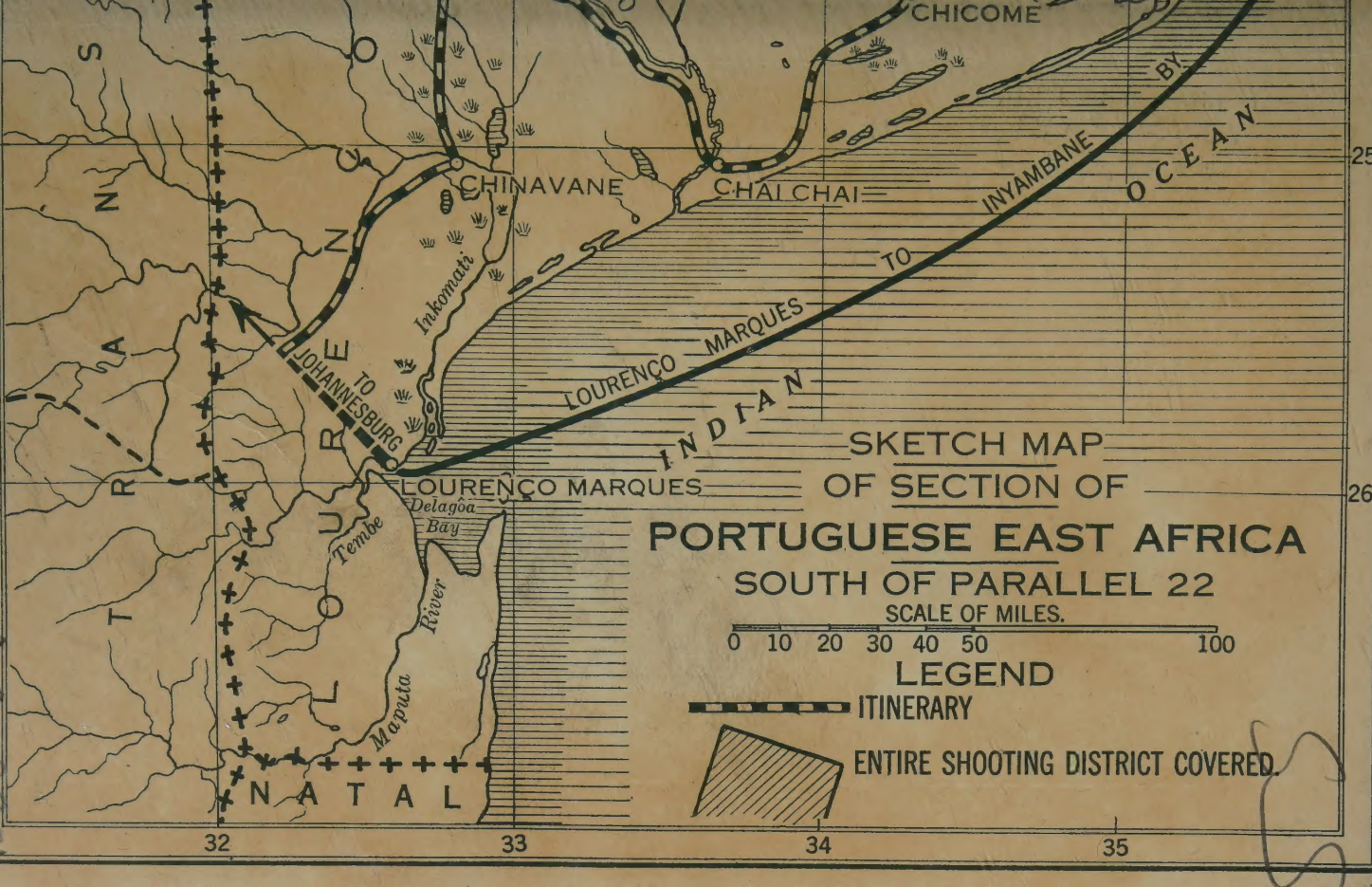
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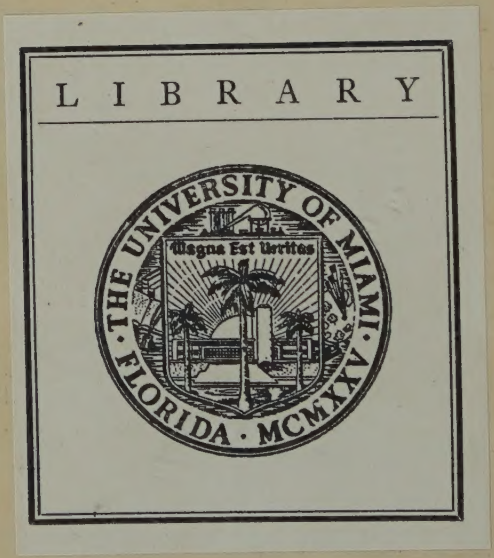

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AFRICAN HUNTING AMONG THE THONGAS

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AFRICAN HUNTING AMONG THE THONGAS

By

George Agnew Chamberlain

Profusely illustrated with photographs by Charles Anderson Cass and the author

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AFRICAN HUNTING
AMONG THE THONGAS

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THIS BOOK IS DEDICATED WITH
PROFOUND GRATITUDE TO THAT
SMALL PORTION OF THE EARTH
WHERE MAN MAY STILL DALLY HAP-
PILY WITH HIS VANISHING KING-
SHIP, WHERE VISION EMBRACES
THE FIRST AND THE LAST OF THE
ÆONS OF HUMAN EXISTENCE,
AND WHERE VARIETY IS WITHOUT
BEGINNING AND WITHOUT END

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PREFACE

THE past half century has produced an extraordinary sequence of volumes on the subjects of African game and African shooting. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that no other single division of literature has exerted more consistently the supreme charm of the printed page—the power to lift body and mind miraculously away from the spotlight of the reading lamp. From the nature of the conditions involved it is a grand company of men who have written on Africa. The heart hammers with excitement at the call of the ancients among them; the head bows low to some of the moderns, specifically to Roosevelt and Selous.

But since the passing of these two towering exponents of sportsmanship a peculiar sentimentality based on false premises has arisen whose popularization threatens the common-sense measure and conception of sport. Among a certain group of writers it has become the fashion to transfer the brand of Cain to the open forehead of the dazed sportsman *qua*

sportsman and incidentally to belittle the dangers of African shooting. Is the big-game hunter nothing but an exterminator—a murderer of the thing he loves best? Does he incur no danger?

The first of these questions is by far the more important and because of certain recent developments opens up an entirely new field of argument. Roosevelt's expedition into Africa was so patently scientific that it precluded criticism, but his contemporary, Selous, the paragon of deportment and achievement on the veldt, suffered so acutely under charges of butchery that his distress very nearly robbed the world of two monumental volumes of nature study and adventure. Selous had no answer for his accusers save silence. He had explanations, but no answer. It would be different were he alive to-day. Why? Because two significant movements have come to a single head in the last few years and this double-barreled development wipes the brand of exterminator forever from the brow of the big-game hunter, professional or amateur, placing it where it belongs, in the center of the forehead of the settler, who accepts it openly and wears it without shame.

Here is the right barrel. Every one who

reads the English language is familiar with the ever-recurring wail in regard to the extermination of the bison. Through custom it has become the fixed point—the pivot—on which swings almost every onslaught of the sentimentalist against the sportsman. How many readers are aware that the bison is at present a drug on the market and that a group of sportsmen, intent on preserving him to future generations, found themselves on the verge of financial disaster, loaded with a rapidly increasing herd of white elephants which they could not give away to the American or Canadian governments, themselves overstocked, or even sell for meat at a profit? The Cyclopean truth is established beyond argument that it is quite possible to bring back the day when millions of bison roamed our Western plains. All we have to do is to make up our minds to the necessity of wiping out Kansans and Kansas corn.

Here is the left barrel, heavily choked. In the summer of 1920 the planters of Natal gathered on foot and horseback, in Cape carts and flivvers, to a monstrous drive, and in a single massacre slaughtered over two thousand head of big game, including specimens of the "white," or square-lipped, rhinoceros whose

threatened extinction, next to that of the bison, has been to the fore in all hit-or-miss attacks on sportsmen. Similar movements on a smaller scale have since been reported in other localities as the result of a controversy which has been going on for years between settlers and preservists. In such cases action is taken openly by the former, and so unanimously that preservation laws and regulations are simply flattened out of existence for the time being.

Now every man who encroaches on controversial ground is under an obligation to make himself clearly understood. The present writer believes in the definite setting aside of certain regions as game areas and in the judicious preservation of all possible species within those regions. He believes further in the establishment of absolute sanctuaries wherever conditions and resources permit. But he *knows* that in every instance where authorities open lands for settlement and simultaneously try to enforce rules for preservation of marauding game, they attempt the impossible and prepare an inevitable doom for the animals they pretend to save. The fact that big game and settlers cannot coexist has become an axiom whose pitiless logic the planters of Natal

were the first to swallow whole regardless of consequences.

On reading that statement the Simon-pure sportsman is apt to feel a sinking of the heart, but let him take courage. It requires the actual occupation of the soil by man to drive out game and at the present rate of settlement, the earth's remaining wild regions will offer good sport for the next hundred years. From the standpoint of woodcraft and skill, shooting is better to-day in Africa than it was a quarter of a century ago, and it is hunting that has made it so. So long as the prospective settler does not actually settle, the presence of gunners tends to perpetuate game by making it wary. Record trophies in Africa are now few and far between, and the spectacle of a thousand beasts of a single species is growing rare, but the variety of the bag to be had by hard work has not diminished.

It is realized that some of these opinions, so baldly affirmed, run counter to the theory of many pre-eminent conservationists who are not open to the charge of sentimentalism. But even men of the type of Dr. W. T. Hornaday and Prof. Henry Fairfield Osborn in our own country, the late C. Gordon Hewitt of Canada, and Major J. Stevenson-

Hamilton, warden of the Sabie Reserve in South Africa, have nothing to lose and everything to gain in pondering over the true inwardness of such incidents as the Natal massacre and the forces which drove the government of the Union of South Africa into signing with great reluctance a contract for the extermination of the famous elephants of the Addo Bush, the very last specimens of their kind left in the vast territories of the colony.

Here is the word passed on to true conservationists: *As far as African big game is concerned, no permanent preservation can succeed which does not devote the regions selected outright to the perpetuating of species.* Generally speaking, the bigger the animal, the greater the marginal border required to protect the invading forces of civilization, specifically of agriculture. As a result, the expenses and economic loss involved are enormous and can be met only by facing the facts squarely and setting about the laborious task of arousing interest on an international scale before the opportunity slips by forever. The writer would join fervently in any crusade founded on a sharp delimitation between settlement and nonsettlement; but he cries out against the costly fallacy of the present vogue—pres-

ervation of game of the marauding type *and* settlement, marching hand in hand. As long as it obtains he will continue to shoot with an easy conscience wherever he can slip in ahead of the organized *battues* of the planter.

Given an adequate range, the perpetuation of species, except through extinction from natural causes, is secure. How many people know that only one ungulate and one bovine mammal known to modern times have disappeared from Africa, the first forty-three and the second a hundred and twenty-two years ago, and that in much less than the same period two new mammals have come to light?[1] It is frankly admitted that there is danger that more will go; but not through sportsmen, who as a class would be the first to back any sane scheme for making their salvation an international affair, administered by individual colonies, but paid for by the purse of the world and guaranteed by treaty.

In further confutation of the sentimentalist it is permissible to note that out of the many tons of meat which have fallen to the writer's gun not a pound, to the very marrow in the

[1] Mammals known to modern times and now extinct: blaubok and quagga. New discoveries of previously unknown species: okapi and pygmy hippopotamus. The pygmy elephant has not developed absolute proof up to the present.

bones, but what has gone down the throat of a human being, much of it into bodies which were on the verge of starvation in the midst of plenty; for no native in Portuguese East Africa is allowed to own a rifle and few have shotguns. By a strange irony of nature, the long drought that starves the Kaffir congregates the game before his eyes.

The question as to whether African shooting is dangerous can be dealt with in a few words. Let us admit at once that samples of every ferocious beast in Africa have been shot by women and killed, trapped, lassoed, and treed by men with the aid of guns, dexterity, horses, and dogs. The indignities heaped upon noble game in the last decade have been blazoned to the world in print and moving pictures and have struck nothing but grief to the heart of the true sportsman. Their inferences cannot be denied. Recklessness, nerve, and luck, or even a Ford car racing across the veldt, can make a fool of a lion.

That is one side of the picture, and here is the other. It is a matter of common knowledge that more white men have been killed by African lion, buffalo, and elephant in the last fifty years than by the sum of all game beasts in the rest of the world in the entire

history of sport. Danger is intrinsically comparative. There is doubtless more peril to life in crossing Longacre Square or Piccadilly Circus in the rush hour than there is in attacking a lion, but is there as much thrill? What makes the difference? Answer that question and you will discover the stripped kernel of adventure.

Another thing that should be remembered is that while the heroic day of any continent may pass, the heroic moment remains. Most of the men who have found African shooting dangerous died at the instant of discovery. It is poor taste for those of us who have never had a cartridge miss fire at the climactic instant to belittle the blazing moment of realization which cries out, "This is the end," and sees a sportsman pay with his life for the fun and the joy he has had of sport.

These pages reveal varying emotions and depict many a thrill, but they will be found to contain no tale of disaster or miraculous escape. Nevertheless, it is hoped that they may throw into bold relief the fact that the taking of wildebeest, waterbuck, sable, eland, kudu, inyala, lion, and elephant within thirty days of London and in a period of seven weeks on the shooting ground, is more than a mere

accomplishment. It represents not only grueling work, but an art, and an art that is worthy of preservation for its intrinsic virtues irrespective of scientific justification.

This brings us to consideration of the object and scope of the present volume. As has been previously stated, it is a grand company of men who have written on Africa. The author does not presume to join that company, since he arrived a generation too late for the valiant day of black powder and the four-bore. His aims are modest. Convinced that in cold logic it is no more reprehensible to kill game in Africa under present conditions than it is to eat meat or wear shoe leather in New York, he wishes to share that assurance with all who love to hunt in person or by proxy. His intention is not to astound, but to lift and to carry.

Keeping that objective in mind, he reserves the right to chat at will, to reminisce anywhere within the bounds of the Province of Mozambique, to lend his experience to the neophyte and offer his observation to the savant for what it is worth. With obeisance to Henri A. Junod, author of the classic *Life of a South African Tribe*, he presents the dusky background of the lovable Thonga nation, soft shadows within a shadow. For the kill is the

least part of hunting. Mysteries of the human family, morning air on the illimitable veldt, the leap of rejuvenated blood, the daily rise and fall of the high tide of vigor, dawn in the park lands, sunset on the copper forests, the level beams of camp lights reaching across the night—all these no less than the pounding heartbeats of the chase are the sportsman's vindication, now and forever.

CHAPTER I

NEW YORK TO DELAGÔA BAY

The wily urge.—Where to go and why.—Batteries, the never-answered question.—The dash from London to Delagôa Bay in twenty days.

WHERE does a shooting trip begin? Is it at the first embarkation, the first camp, the first kill, or at adventure's conception when you murmur to your friend, "Have you forgotten that there are still places where strikes are unknown, where there are no telephones, no coal and ice famines, no mails, where suffrage has not yet been dreamed, where man still moons along in the unshaken belief that he is king, and where the whole octave of horned game from the tiny Livingstone to the lordly kudu wanders the unfenced plains by day and elephants crash and lions roar across the stillness of the starlit night?"

He stares at you. His first thought is that you are drunk, or would be if you could. He does not see the picture. The presentation has been too sudden, too removed, too foreign

to the rasping grind of what has come to be everyday life. The only effect of your raving question is to make him subconsciously dissatisfied, so that instinctively he looks back to last Sunday's foursome or forward to next Saturday's cup match and tries to puff these incidents into high-lights of existence. Your pride is hurt and aroused; you return to the attack in dead earnest, not then, but later.

In trying to make him grasp the far world in your mind's eye, the well-remembered picture comes more and more clearly to your own vision. You see the waterbuck lazing in some placid *vlei*, calm and detached as cattle in a meadow until a breath of man-tainted air sends them to their feet and they stand, thick-necked, alert, the widespread lyres of their graceful horns catching the flat gleam of the morning sun! You feed him that close-up slowly and then go on to tell of troops of the wildebeest, too-curious idiot of the plains, facile meat for the hungry camp. Of sable, deep-chested, scythe-horned, startlingly black and white, and incorrigibly polygamous. Of the gentle eland, bulkiest of all antelope, spiral-horned, tufted and belled and tipping the scale at just under a ton of as fine-grained beef as palate could wish. You

name the wary kudu, whisper of the still shyer inyala, and murmur a half-promise of elephant and lion.

Your friend's eye fills slowly with the light of dreams. His mind goes back to memories of his own of wide spaces, of the long shot at mountain sheep, of crashing moose and shadowy caribou, of shuffling grizzly and the fugitive black bear, of the joy of fatigue with camp at its long end; but most of all, of the smell of wood fires burning in the open before the angle of a waiting tent.

With such a picture thrown up in the highlights of happy recollection, the fact that the mere act of killing is not all of shooting stands out in its true proportions. You feel and bow to the truth of it because you read your own heart. You know that against the lure of new scenes, unvisited places, mounting appetite, surging blood, clearing eye, returning youth, and the unfathomable peace of an utterly new yet primitive world, the actual achievement of another trophy becomes a mere incident with the moral aspects of combat and murder shrunk to the dimensions of a discussion as to whether it is right to wear shoe-leather or bait a hook to catch a whale.

Quite aside from the atavistic and repre-

hensible inclination to take life, every man dreams of escape, longs to get away; and playing solely upon that master chord you drive your friend to a deep sigh, to saying he can't possibly go, to shaking his head and sighing again, and finally to staring ten thousand miles afar with a half smile on his lips which proclaims him irretrievably caught.

Such was the inception of the African shooting trip undertaken by Charles A. Cass and myself; it remained only to choose a locale. I had spent several years in Portuguese East Africa, and there were many unvisited game districts of which I had heard great rumors and that I longed to see. But an unknown region is always a gamble. Nothing is truer than that where game has been shot, it will be shot again until the last buck falls.

That statement runs counter to common opinion, but not to experience. Take, for illustration, Kilometer 53 on the railway from Lourenço Marques to Johannesburg. For at least a decade, and probably two, this spot has been the Sunday shooting-ground for every tu'penny gun in Delagôa Bay. Two or three times in the season the local seeker for variety at minimum cost will try other

spots, only to come back to the old standby. At Kilometer 53, within sight of the railroad, one could and can be sure of a shot at steinbŏk and duiker, frequently at reedbuck.

On one occasion, accompanied by two friends who suffered equally with the itch of the Beyond, I struck across this familiar haunt to the vicinity of the Little Lebombos. We had the idea that once we got beyond the range of the week-end trippers we would find the untroubled source of the unfailing supply of game. We took an ox cart, a complete camping outfit, and provisions for a week. During three days of cruising this way and that under a blazing sun none of us fired a single shot.

We gave it up and made for home. Long before we sighted the watertank at Kilometer 53 my companions were riding the baggage on the jolting cart, but I had a .22 high-power Savage, newly appeared on the market at that time, which I was particularly keen to try out. I also had a hunch. I stuck to the walking in spite of jeers, kept well ahead of the outfit, and when within three miles of the railroad killed four running buck in quick succession.

From a series of like incidents I have come

to the following conclusions: There are certain fundamental reasons, of which we know nothing or little, why game will frequent a certain spot. We often know why it goes away, but we don't know why it *comes back*. Frequent shooting makes it wild and tends indirectly toward modified preservation, while a single flood or even a drought will sometimes sweep a flat clean of reedbuck for a period of years after a dozen rifles, busy every season, have failed to make an appreciable impression. Generally speaking, there is only one sure exterminator of game and that is the settlers. The actual and continuing presence of man and his works inevitably blots out the major wild life.

Having these considerations in mind, I was not inclined to take the risk of trying for virgin country. It was Cass's first trip to Africa, and the shooting season comes but once a year. Such an expedition as we were planning either succeeds or is a total loss, as there is no time to try, try again in widely separated districts. So we decided to make for Portuguese East Africa where I had passed seven happy years and to shoot on the Plains of Panda, provided we could get the necessary special permit.

A few weeks later we were together in London, sweating blood over the choice of batteries. That hyperbole is just barely an exaggeration, for there is no battle of experts more baffling than the endless discussion as to the proper armament for tackling the heavy and the dangerous game of Africa.

It would take a book to describe the evolution of the sporting rifle, the ups and downs of bores, ballistics, and calibers, the reactions of a dozen styles of bullet, the astonishing ascendancy and recent collapse of the needle-gun in the estimation of the great hunters, and the weighing of the rough-and-ready American product against the exquisite finish of the most expensive heavy English guns compared, in turn, with the lightness of the asplike cordite French weapons.

An old hand at the game invariably starts in with what he is convinced is a perfect battery; just as invariably he comes out saying, "Well, I carried this and that; but *if I were you—!*" Only one admonition can never go wrong; if you have a rifle which gets results, what is known as a "lucky" gun, hang on to it as you would to your back teeth. There is an old and ugly stock-model .318 of the vintage of 1910, and a more ancient

double-barreled .450 by Evans, for the repossession of which, could they be traced, I would give their weight in liquor!

Needless to say, Cass and I purchased two "perfect batteries" after haunting a dozen famous gun makers morning, noon, and evening for a week. We then blarneyed a shipping office into renting us a last-minute cabin, a matter that no amount of cabling or prevision had enabled us to arrange, and seventeen days later arrived at Cape Town, where we first met the aid of the far-reaching hand of friendship in the shape of a special recommendation to the customs. With twenty-four out of twenty-five pieces of baggage we caught the mail train for Johannesburg, only to learn, upon arrival there, that in spite of our forethought in wiring, no seats were available at any price, licit or illicit, on the train for Lourenço Marques, capital of Portuguese East Africa, for a week!

By this time we were thoroughly awake to the fact that any minute lost might cost us a lot of shooting. It was the last day of August; the season closed on October 31st, and we were still many hundreds of miles short of our goal. Remembering our escape from this predicament and the whole-hearted assistance rendered

us later, I am tempted to lay down the rule that you must make at least two journeys to Africa to pull off one successful shooting trip—the first to make friends, the next to get game. In Johannesburg, W. P. Moore Kellam, a fellow countryman, was the medium through which we tackled a high official of the South African Railways and the interview deserves recording.

"C——, you remember Chamberlain, don't you?"

"Oh! Halloa!"

Desultory conversation; the fixing of the ship and year of a voyage together; war reminiscences; and then Kellam: "C——, these chaps want to take to-night's train for Delagôa Bay and there isn't a seat available."

"Well, what about it? I'm not a station master or a bally guard or even a sanguinary bed steward." Color rising and eyes bulging. "Colossal cheek. Typical case of Yankee impertinence. Why don't you go to a milliner or a hairdresser? Two hours to train time and, 'C——, won't you hang seats from the roof!' The train's full and that's all there is to it."

Kellam, calmly, "Well, run another train."

C——, whispering, eyes turning glassy: "Another train! Run another train!"

"Will you dine with us—early—so they can catch it?"

"Can't. Dining out."

"Well, knock off and come up to the Carlton for tea."

"Aw right. Wait till I sign this—!—!!—!!! order for an extra carriage."

As a result we arrived in Lourenço Marques (known among the British as Delagôa Bay) on the following afternoon, twenty days to the hour from the time we had left Southampton.

The capital of the Province of Mozambique nas retained more individuality to the square inch than any other place I can think of to the square mile. East and West meet on an entire meridian, but nowhere else on the face of the earth does the remnant of a prehistoric world lean over the fence of progress as it does at this mightiest of the ports of Africa.

When I was appointed American consul at Lourenço Marques in 1909 I could find only one man who had been there, and that ten years before. "Well, it's this way," he said. "You land from the steamer in a whaleboat and ride ashore on the neck of a Kaffir, who puts you down in eighteen inches of sand—eighteen inches deep and fifty miles wide. There's

a square, paved with mosaic, with a kiosk at each corner, where everybody meets for drinks from five to seven. Then you climb into a 'ricksha with a boy pulling and another pushing, and go anywhere you like at a mile an hour. It's all the same sand except the grounds of the Eastern Telegraph station on the hill."

I landed from an ocean liner at a concrete wharf a kilometer long, equipped with silent hydraulic cranes, and found waiting a dozen taxis, forty miles of macadam roads, almost as many of tramway tracks, clubs, hotels, and, for my individual joy, a charming house with hardwood floors and broad tiled verandas, thoroughly mosquito-proofed.

That was the prosaic side of the picture, and in spite of hordes of half-naked natives chanting at their work; of other hordes of dazed savage recruits debarking for a first trip to the mines on the Rand; of bearded Banyans in skull caps of cloth of gold and flowing robes; of other Asiatics wearing a looped sheet in lieu of trousers; of quick-witted Eurasians glitteringly white, all but their faces and hands, from pipe-clayed helmet to pipe-clayed shoes; of Swahilis in dark red tarboosh and sheer, tight-collared, lawn nightgowns—in spite of

all these variegated daubs of color and an occasional forlorn 'ricksha, depression seized upon me.

Three years were to elapse before I perceived the bustling town in its true perspective as the incongruous centerpiece within a pattern of an astonishing assortment of game. Take the sixty-ton crane on the wharf at Delagôa Bay for a fulcrum and a radius of sixty miles. Draw a circle. Within its perimeter I was destined to shoot duiker, steinbŏk, reedbuck, bushbuck, roan, buffalo, rhino, and elephant, and to see in addition leopard, waterbuck, wildebeest, impala, and inyala, to say nothing of hippo, crocodile, monkey, the giant bustard, and lesser feathered game. I venture to affirm that this list, corrected to 1916, presents the possibility of as varied a bag as any man ever took in a single district south of the Zambesi at any period in the history of African sport. With the possible exception of rhino, it holds good to this day.[1]

[1] (It is only fair to note that buffalo, elephant, roan, and inyala within this region have been subject to partial or intermittent protection.)

CHAPTER II

DELAGÔA BAY TO INYAMBANE

Friends and Lourenço Marques.—Five kinds of Mozambique.—A sideslip up the Tembe.—The W. N. L. A., model labor agency of the world.

AS a consequence my memories of Lourenço Marques will always remain a grotesque yet soul-satisfying medley made up of afternoon teas and elephants in conjunction, office routine and buffaloes, tennis tournaments and the shy inyala, bridge parties and the bullet-rush of the bushbuck; of dictating mail in the morning and signing it at night, with a couple of duiker bagged in the interlude. Bracketed between two consecutive days stands out a memorable hunt. I left town on the one-o'clock train, by sunset was ensconced on a bank overhanging a water hole, and before the setting of the full moon had witnessed the ghostly approach of seventeen ponderous roan, had secured a splendid pair, and was back in my office by four o'clock of the following afternoon.

The group of residents who appreciated these conditions enough to take advantage of them was amazingly small. Lourenço Marques was credited with a population of 13,000, 3,000 of whom were Europeans of various races. Out of this number I doubt whether more than a score had ever shot major game in the proper use of the term. There were a few notable exceptions, all my intimates, and most of them were on hand to share in the warm-hearted welcome extended to Cass and myself.

Ordinarily it takes weeks to launch such an expedition as we had in mind. The choice of a locality; the engaging of cook and servants; the assembling of equipment; the ordering and packing of provisions in boxes of forty pounds each to meet the exact requirements of a week; the transfer of money; the securing of big-game licenses and transportation; the cabling for guides, and, above all, the arranging of mounts and a *safari* to meet one at some distant point—are undertakings upon whose thorough accomplishment hangs the difference between success and failure, comfort and distress.

I take little credit to myself for the *tour de force* by which all these matters were attended

ROAN ANTELOPE HEAD

SNOWY IBIS AGAINST THE INTERMINABLE WALLS OF MANGROVE OF THE TEMBE

to in the record and all but miraculous space of forty-eight hours. In the first place, and as a prelude to other herculean assistance, Mr. A. T. Long, agent for the Union of South Africa, had corralled my "boy," Edy bin Feraje, my companion and gun bearer on innumerable outings varying from a day to two months. While we were still at the station Edy undertook to secure overnight a cook and a personal servant for Cass.

Doctor Bostock, Provincial head of the all-powerful Witwatersrand Native Labour Association, an organization familiarly known in every nook of Portuguese East Africa south of parallel 22 as the W. N. L. A., assured us so casually that he would have sixty carriers and a couple of horses awaiting the first possible steamer to reach Inyambane, the point from which we were to strike inland, that we could scarcely credit the good news.

It is almost as hard for two old-timers to settle on a locality for a joint shooting trip as it is for a bull to scratch one horn with the other, but fortunately I was the only old-timer in our party. At the club, at dinner, at the bars in the Rua Araujo, wherever we went, well-meaning friends would ask Cass where we were going and, when they heard, would shake

their heads sorrowfully and proceed to give him an earful of Gijà or the District of Mozambique or Baruè. On more than one occasion they had him worried, but I never wavered. I knew almost to a day how long it took to get to any spot in the Province and with only eight weeks to go before the rains, there was no time to wabble. If we could get the necessary permission we were going to Panda.

Just here it is only fair to orient the reader on the physical and political geography of a country practically unknown to the tourist class of sportsmen. There is no Nairobi in Portuguese territory to which a man can send a cable, pack nothing but his guns, and upon arrival find everything ready—tents, bedding, table ware, guides, gun bearers, and *safari*—and where he can actually contract for a shot at almost any species of the game of the country.

Portuguese East Africa is officially known as the Province of Mozambique and is semi-autonomous under a Governor-General appointed by the Colonial Office in Lisbon. There is a broad strip, however, bounded on the south by parallel 22 and on the north by the Zambesi River over which the Governor-General exercises only a phantom authority.

This territory forms an absolute principality under charter to the Mozambique Company and has its own governor, police, excise, and, in short, everything that goes with delegated sovereignty.

That is not all the story. Within the Mozambique Company is the Buzi Company, which in turn has sublet charter powers that include the shooting rights over its lands. There are two or three more chartered companies north of the Zambesi, one active and some comatose, with which the reader need not burden his mind. To avoid ambiguity, however, he should differentiate clearly between the following names: Mozambique, the Province; Mozambique, the Chartered Company; Mozambique, the Island, most ancient of European settlements on the East Coast; and Mozambique, the northernmost District of the Province of Mozambique!

Anyone can get a big-game shooting license in the Mozambique Company's territories by paying for it; he can also get one from the Provincial government, but with a difference. It will be good for only one Provincial district and will not hold for certain royal preserves known as Condados, unless especially indorsed. Among these semiprotected regions

are both banks of the Maputa River, where herds of elephant, ranging from a family of three to troops of a hundred, linger within thirty miles of Delagôa Bay; and the administration of Panda, under the jurisdiction of the District of Inyambane.

Through the good offices of the American consul, Mr. Ray, the Acting Governor-General, himself a big-game hunter of high reputation, not only gave us the necessary indorsement for Panda, but instructed the authorities along our entire itinerary to render us every aid, specifically in the holding of trackers pending our arrival and in the recruiting of carriers.

We arrived in Lourenço Marques on a Saturday afternoon, knowing that the first tiny steamer for up-the-coast ports would leave exactly a week later. Our great ambition was to finish outfitting in time to catch that boat. On a trip to Panda seven years before with Dr. Pinto Coelho, as splendid a shot and generous a companion as a man ever had, I had secured a single rogue elephant and somehow gained the impression that he was the only one of his species in the entire region.

Obsessed with this idea, I suggested to Cass as a tentative plan that we bend all our energies to getting to Panda with the least pos-

sible delay, spend four of seven precious weeks after wildebeest, waterbuck, sable, kudu, eland, and possibly inyala and lion, rushing back for a last-minute desperate try at elephant on the Maputa.

The mere mention of such a bag sharpened Cass's anticipation to a razor edge and loaded me down with responsibility. None of the bucks mentioned would dress much under the weight of a fair-sized elk, and the eland, the largest antelope in the world, has been known to run to close on a ton of flesh and bone.

So cordially were we assisted by friends, authorities, bankers, and purveyors of transportation, equipment, and provisions, that by Monday night everything was so ordered that personally we had nothing further to attend to until the hour of embarking on the following Saturday. This left us with four clear days, and immediately my brain began to seethe with memories of several unsuccessful close brushes with the rare inyala not fifty miles away on the banks of the Tembe. At midnight I interrupted a serious session at cards to announce that by hook or by crook Cass and I would have to get off after inyala the following morning.

Mr. Hugh Le May, who, as the least of his

innumerable enterprises, dealt in automobiles, had almost reduced his manager to tears by handing over to our mercies a brand-new car fresh from the show window immediately upon our arrival. He now added a motor boat. Long disappeared to return with two boys carrying a complete telescoped cooking outfit and table-ware basket. Bostock contributed other necessities, and Pinto Coelho telephoned to his house to have a tent delivered at our hotel at once, as the one we had brought from London was the single piece of luggage which had failed to catch the mail train and had not yet arrived. By noon on Tuesday we were off.

The success or failure of this wild dash after inyala between the interminable walls of mangrove which bank the Tembe will be covered in a subsequent chapter. Suffice it to say here that on the way out from England I had advised Cass that he would not see a drop of rain until the 1st of November, that the mosquito was the most dangerous thing in Africa, and next to that, cold water for bathing purposes was absolutely taboo. During the three days we were away it first rained intermittently, and finally poured almost without a let up. Pinto Coelho's servants had sent us

an enormous fly without the tent and we were stung unmercifully by mosquitoes. The usual canvas bathtub was also missing from the tent bag, and we bathed in an icy swamp hole!

By the mercy of Providence and prompt doses of quinine we suffered nothing further than discomfort from this experience, and safely embarked on the little steamer for Inyambane, we had two days in which to check up every item of our own outfit and to reflect on the ugliness of greed and the folly of trying to rush Africa off its feet. We found that we were equipped for every eventuality and thoroughly provisioned for five weeks, one more than we intended to stay.

On the 12th of September, exactly one month from the day we left Southampton on the greatest of the Union Castle's liners, we were watching tide and wind hammer a lateen-rigged boat laden with all we possessed, including a precious cook and two *safari* servants, against the interminable length of the concrete pier at Inyambane.

The all but naked crew, trained in the choppy waters of a treacherous bay, were vociferous and apparently panicky, but in reality they did not lose their heads. Having failed to swing off from the pier head into the

wind, they faced the long task of clawing their way to shore and a mile along the beach before they could set their pointed sails. During a nervous hour they exhibited the unfailing patience and energy the African brings to bear on any fixed task within the range of his comprehension and which, time and again, has made white men thrill to the thought that, with all his faults, the Kaffir is seldom a quitter in a tight place.

From the vantage point of the pier and later from the spray-soaked stern of a fast cutter smartly handled, we watched the cargo boat, the only lugger that attempted a crossing that day, extricate itself from one difficulty after another until, just before sunset and still in midchannel, one of its bellied sails blew away in ribbons and we felt our hearts sink. However, Mr. Abrantes, our friend and host for the night, said cheerfully that the accident meant nothing worse than a forced landing down the beach and a long carry.

Mr. Abrantes was in a position to lend us extraordinary assistance. The W. N. L. A., of which he was local manager, recruits annually between fifty and sixty thousand "boys" for the mines of the Rand. As an organization it is astonishingly unique. It paid Sir

MINE "BOYS" RETURNING FROM THE RAND

FEEDING A THOUSAND NEW RECRUITS AT THE MAXIXE STATION OF THE W. N. L. A.

Almroth Wright $50,000 for a visit to Johannesburg to institute research in connection with pneumonia, and no less an authority than General Gorgas, sanitarian of the Panama Canal Zone, was brought to Africa to study the compounds of the association on the Rand and in Portuguese East Africa with a view to perfecting the conditions under which the native lives while in residence and in transit.

In contrast to the murderous practices which have obtained elsewhere with regard to semisavage labor, the W. N. L. A. coddles its recruits from the moment they sign on until they are repatriated and returned to the very villages from which they were drawn. Every step in the progress is controlled by intercolonial treaty, but quite aside from the requirements of governmental supervision the association has reduced kindness to a system which is a marvel, not of sentimental benevolence, but of far-sighted policy.

Powerful enemies are arrayed against an institution which draws fifty thousand laborers a year from a country in the process of settlement. Its answer to all attacks is that, directly and indirectly, it is the source of revenue which for years has made the Province of Mozambique the one blazing jewel in the

colonial diadem of Portugal. The direct revenue probably does not exceed a quarter of a million dollars, but the sum of hut taxes, paid to this day in gold, purely by reason of the annual exodus to the Rand, reaches an astonishing total.

Secure on the side of its benefit to the Provincial pocketbook, the W. N. L. A. has bent all its energies to cutting the ground from under the reformer and professional scandalmonger. Such spectacular gestures as the employment of Sir Almroth Wright and General Gorgas are merely the offshoots from a solid undergrowth which it has taken years to establish. Time and again Cass and I were to come upon model stations ranging from that at Maxixe under Mr. Abrantes, where a thousand boys lined up for breakfast, down to a hut or two and a compound in charge of a native caretaker.

These stations are known to every Kaffir as Stichen-ka-le-John, a corruption of the English words station and Johannesburg. They are equally well known to be sanctuaries. Once within their limits, no native can be recruited for military service or forced labor of any kind. Furthermore, every dusky traveler—man, woman, or child—is free to line up for food at eleven o'clock on any morning.

CHAPTER III

ON SAFARI

Maxixe, across the bay from Inyambane.—Boris, prince in name and sportsmanship.—Mostly women porters.—The trek to Panda.—Getting rid of the women.—Settling camp.—"All the comforts of home," as a policy.—Sir Samuel Baker started the fashion of taking one's wife into Africa in 1862!

WHO that has shot big game or little does not know the strange fever which possesses one to get on the shooting ground? A missed train connection is a tragedy, a day's stop-over or a week's wait for a steamer seems to open a great gap in the entire shooting season. Any suggestion to take it easy, to wait for this or that eventuality, seems stupidity or worse—a betrayal. Consequently it was an unmixed joy to find ourselves in the hands of a sportsman possessed of the sixth sense which enabled him to stand in our own impatient shoes and give one quiet order after another toward the immediate retrieving of

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our kit and the assembling of the *safari* for an early start on the following day.

We slept our one night at Maxixe in a model hut built on Kaffir lines, but carried to an exceptional degree of perfection. The high peak of its conical roof was so closely woven as to be vermin proof, its circular wall was wainscoted, the floor concreted, and windows and doors mosquito-proofed. Lying on my back in a slanting shaft of moonlight, I recognized it by his own description as the last home of Prince Boris Czetwerlynski, *bon viveur*, open-handed dispenser of hospitality to bygone generations in London, Vienna, Paris, and Petersburg, guest of the Khedive in '79, famous shot on three continents, but happiest of all when fortune left him exiled and joyously stranded, still young on the verge of seventy, at the edge of a wilderness of game. He is mentioned here not on account of his prowess or because he was a *reconteur* who could bewitch a table of kindred spirits in seven languages, but because Boris still lives in the mind of many a man as an exponent complete in himself of that freemasonry which welds the big-game shots of all nations into a close corporation, a guild protected by the hard and fast rules of sportsmanship and achievement.

The road from New York to the great valley of the Inhasune is a long road, but the longest stretch in all its month and a half of travel is the sandy highway which forms the fifty-mile link between sea coast and the government post at Panda. Even so, one had the feeling of letting go a breath held for weeks as in the early morning sixty porters, mostly strapping women, lined up to take our loads in the vast compound of the Association. The war with its flood of back pay to conscripted natives, coupled with vagaries of exchange and of paper money, had played havoc with the humble profession of carrier. Scarcely an able-bodied man could be persuaded to take a burden, and where, six years ago, a hunting *safari* would have scorned to number a single woman in its paid ranks, to-day he who travels by load and carry is lucky to get away with enough men to bring in meat for the camp, an office never performed by women save in the case of elephant, when the whole population of a district, men, women, and children, turn out as by one accord.

The widespread illusion as to which is the weaker sex evaporates rapidly as you lift the hem of the veil of Africa. It goes without saying that women should fetch wood and water

and till the soil, but, fall back to the tail end of the *safari* toward the close of a long march and you will find them carrying the heaviest loads uncomplainingly, the male stalwarts whom you picked for the job walking along burdenless until within a few hundred yards of camp.

Nor is this the limit of the women's physical measure. Among the six tribes of the Thonga nation, at least, it is the women who get up the dances, who clap and sing by the hour, while the boys and men perform in groups, and who, when every one else is tired out, enter the ring first in fours and couples, according to age, and finally bring the celebration to the low level of an orgy by executing a series of *pas seules* never surpassed on the Amsterdam roof. From first to last the women are the inciters and the unwearying stayers; the men the possessors of what modesty there is.

It was a suspicion of this truth which gave the march from the coast to Panda a tinge of false color. There are *safaris* and *safaris*, but the *safari* whose avowed object is the pursuit of big game is a very special affair, bound by rules which have been ingrained in the tribal life of Africa through many generations and perhaps for centuries. Generally speaking,

the white man is considered immune from the innumerable taboos of the black, but sooner or later little mysteries which puzzle lift a corner here and there, giving him a glimpse of some traditional rock on which his purpose crashed and went awry. These mysteries are never wholly learned; they come slowly to light with the growth of knowledge or sometimes by a violent collision such as we were destined to experience on our first elephant hunt. Ordinarily they yield only to unflagging observation, and each misty revelation opens so small a door on the vast intricacy of the native cosmos that one bows to the justice of that most ancient saying, "Out of Africa, always something new."

It was a relief to find that through the good offices of the Governor-General the administration at Panda, in addition to summoning the three famous trackers of the district, had corralled enough men carriers to enable us to pay off all our women. The official rate for the work they had done was one escudo, which at the exchange of the day amounted in American money to twenty cents for a fifty-mile carry. We paid them triple wages, turned them loose in a body, and proceeded to enroll the men of the country, a totally dif-

ferent type from the "boys" of the near-by coast. We took on thirty-two, lined them up, and when the starting whistle blew, it was a joy to see them rush for the loads, two of them fighting over an ammunition box long after they had felt its weight. They were *safari* trained and they fought over the box, not because it was small, but because they knew what it contained and felt that he who carried it was only one step below the angels, those crowned heads in the hierarchy of the expedition who carried no burden save a loaded gun and a cartridge bag.

After only two hours' delay we sent the *safari* ahead in midafternoon with orders to camp as far afield as they could get before dark, and then held our first *indaba* under the shade of a great cashew tree with Magudogudo, Bongo, Madada, and Maoia, old friends of mine, tried trackers and hunters of the first water in their own right. Magudogudo was a big man in the native eye, the possessor of seven wives, and the nearest lineal descendant to the great Gungunyane, last of the kings who made war on a large scale against the Portuguese. His assistant was Bongo, a colorless individual.

Following established policy, it was neces-

PRINCE BORIS'S MODEL HUT WHERE WE SPENT OUR NIGHT AT MAXIXE

OUR FOUR TRACKERS

Left to right: Maoia, Madada, Magudogudo and Bongo

sary to introduce my shooting mate to Magudogudo with some formality as a chief of no mean proportions in his own country, to enlarge upon the extent of his establishment and the hordes at his beck and call, and to tell the truth as to his prowess with the rifle. Magudogudo was to hold him in his special care, work for him as he had never worked before, show him all the long list of major game which haunt the margins of the Inhasune, the Nyagulaze, the Nyamekelengue, the Nyampalapala and the Inhawalungo until we reached the far banks of the Chicome, and receive his commensurate reward not in paper, but in clinking gold, as befitted an enterprise between chiefs.

To my own lot fell Madada, a man full-grown now, but who as a straight youth had won his accolade as a master hunter in my company seven years before. He welcomed me with a gleam in his eye which was warmer and more intimate than a handshake. His stories were my stories. In the long months which had intervened he had gone back in narrative by many a camp fire to scenes and feats which we held in common. It did not surprise him that I had returned; lion still roared on the plains around Miquel, elephants

still plowed their way through a dozen tangled forests, and as for meat for the camp in the shape of waterbuck, wildebeest, sable, and eland, where they wandered they wrote their telltale name. He introduced his father, Maoia, a quiet veteran of sixty, who held a hoary record of five elephants with an old-style Martini rifle, and who was to carry my second gun during nearly two months of grueling work.

The retinue and paraphernalia of an African *safari* seem cumbersome and all but incomprehensible to the lonely huntsman of the Maine woods with his pack and single guide, or to the man who takes an outfit of a few horses and a couple of Indians into the wilds of the Northwest for the full length of the season; but there is no detail in all the apparent pomp and circumstance which has not a solid utilitarian or essential foundation. African shooting is unlike that of all other continents in that it is linked to treacheries of climate, beast, and native superstition. Sun, fever, and lions are alone enough to give it a rich tone of its own, but the sane precautions that one takes against these accustomed features are as nothing before the myriad little lessons which the white men of three gener-

ations have accumulated toward the comfort and well-being of those who follow the big-game trail. Far more than in any other country the success of an expedition hangs on facilities for prompt recuperation of the physical force expended and for the upkeep of individual morale and prestige. The very touches which in the West would earn the name of "dude outfit" and proclaim a man a tenderfoot or a sybarite at large, here mark him for a veteran.

The old-timer in Africa calls for tea in a loud voice at the end of the hottest and thirstiest day, and, having scalded his throat, never omits his evening bath, which is also as hot as flesh will stand. He changes everything he has on, demands of his cook as good a four-course dinner as he ever ate at home, and tops it with five grains of quinine. After a pipe and a nightcap he retires to his tent, draws the mosquito curtains, tucks them under the sill, weights them down (in a strong wind sews them, if necessary), and then, however sleepy he may be, turns on his electric torch and hunts religiously the most dangerous game in Africa, the tiny anopheles. If he omits any one of these ceremonies, he is looked upon as a fool and a shirker.

At the conclusion of that statement the ghost of Selous is apt to stalk forth arrayed in the great adventurer's favorite costume of a hat, a shirt, and nothing else, practicing his theory of exposure. What is not so apt to be remembered is that on the three occasions when he entered the low veldt of Portuguese East Africa he shot nothing and crawled out a wreck from fever; but even in defeat he was a teacher. He taught conclusively that what the physique of Selous could not face, no other white man could endure.

There is no miasmic region on the whole littoral from Pongoland to Ibo which I have not visited. In 1910, W. M. S. Selwyn, F. R. G. S., and myself were the first white men to traverse the ninety miles between Parapato and Moma and live to tell the tale. It is true that our three predecessors were killed by natives and not by fever, but that particular locality is conceded to be the home of blackwater *par excellence* on the East Coast of Africa. We were in it for thirty days. During the last week our three Swahili servants, unprotected from mosquitoes, were knocked down as if they had been pole-axed and had to be carried. So virulent was the attack that one of them went blind and did not recover his sight for over a month.

After six years of this sort of thing with never a day of fever I naturally began to wonder if I were not one of those rarest of *rara avis*, the malarial immune. In 1916, on the eve of an apparently final departure from Africa and when at the apex of physical fitness, I was on the Zambesi River a little below Tete and decided to expose myself deliberately to a combination of sun, a cold plunge, and infection. I did so, and upon arrival at Johannesburg two weeks later was laid low with a severe attack of fever, my first and last.

I believe that the anopheles moves and bites only in the dark and that a blaze of light in camp, heavy tweed trousers, mosquito boots, and an insect-proofed tent are sovereign preventatives. When, as occasionally is bound to happen, one or more bloated representatives of the enemy are found on the walls of the tent in the morning, a hammer blow of from twenty to thirty grains of quinine within twenty-four hours is almost sure to repair the damage at the cost of a buzzing headache. I believe further, that as regards African shooting, discomfort of any kind *while in camp* is merely a sign of incompetence.

Even sheer ostentation has its advantages in a society that we call savage, but which is in

reality the last as it was the first word in snobism. For the white man as an individual the black has no respect whatever. The native's assistance, homage, and the amount of provisions which will appear in camp for purchase are in exact ratio to the size of the *mulungo's* following, personal retinue, and equipage. The professional hunter who travels with a skeleton outfit, or the white man who goes astray in the bush, gets scant help and no food from the Thongas he encounters. He is shown an empty pot and greeted with a singsong refrain as meek as it is musical, and so cynical as to be amusing when it isn't maddening to a hungry stomach. The native, surrounded by acres of manioc and amid a pestering flock of chickens, displays an empty pot and brazenly murmurs, "*Ku-ha-va*," which phrase, being translated, will have a familiar sound to American ears. It means, "That's all there is; there is no more."

Aside from these justifications for a large and well-appointed *safari*, it should be remembered that it takes from six to fourteen men to bring into camp the meat of a single antelope,[1] and that fifty have all they can do to

[1] The reader should look up the word "antelope." Roughly speaking, all deer shed their horns, while no antelope does.

strip the tusks and trophies from an elephant in twenty-four hours. It is a fact that the marches within the hunting area are usually short, but it is equally true that one invariably wishes to move rapidly and that light loads are the surest road to quick comfort.

The outfit which we took into the Inhasune Valley left Panda fifty-three strong and numbered seventy at the end of six weeks' shooting, but at no time was it cumbersome. To see it on the march one would have said that such a heterogenous gathering could not possibly settle down to order in the course of a night, much less fulfill its mission of providing comfort at short notice to those who were footing the bill. As a matter of fact, however, it took only thirty minutes at each arrival to transform itself from apparent chaos into a replica in the rough of a well-appointed home. The explanation is that, once a site was chosen, every detail in the intricate business of settling down was performed simultaneously.

It was the office of ten of the coast carriers to clear the ground of sticks, weeds, and leaves as clean as a swept floor and set two many-

There are no antelope in North or South America. The so-called pronghorn antelope sheds its horns and forms a species by itself. It is not an antelope.

branched saplings for hat and clothes racks; of twenty of the Panda men to build outhouse and bath and clear a path to each; of the two tent boys, who acted as foremen on the march, to set the tents and the dining-room and kitchen flies; of the mess captains among the porters to fetch wood for the entire camp and put their own pots to boil; of the cook to start his fire; of the two personal servants to make the beds, get ready the bath and a change of clothing; of the horse boys to look after their charges; and, finally, of Magudo-gudo and Madada to use their authority with their own and the women of the near-by kraal to fetch an unlimited supply of water, whatever the distance.[1]

The hurly-burly of this multifarious performance seldom lasts for half an hour, yet so spoiled is the African traveler that even this short interim between activity and comfort fills him with impatience in spite of the fact that hammock chairs and tables are the first of all the loads to be thrown open for his use. As the camp takes form rapidly before his eyes serenity returns, and he emerges quite

[1] Our great camp at Gumbo, where we stayed longer than at any other, was over a mile from water, and we not only had with us two horses, but each of us took a bath every evening.

suddenly into complete peace when he finds grouped about him in intensive formation every necessity and many of the luxuries of life. On the rack within easy reach hang hat, coat, water bottle, field glass, camera, mosquito boots, a suit of pajamas, and a loaded gun; on the table before him stand steaming teapot, glasses, and a cool bottle waiting to crown the long, hot day with a first drink. At his side is the precious secretary bag which contains a skeleton pharmacopœia, toilet accessories, writing materials, housewife, and a thousand dollars in five varieties of cash. If there is anything that has been forgotten, he has only to shout for it, and whoever is responsible will come running to show him that it is where it ought to be—under his nose.

Not long ago a veteran collector for the New York Museum of Natural History expatiated at some length in print against the popular illusion that white women are barred from African travel, and to explode the fallacy he first established the reputation of his wife as an elephant hunter in her own right and later took a party which included three women and a child to the borders of Lake Kivu. The illusion against which he battles exists only outside of Africa. Sixty years ago Sir Samuel

Baker inaugurated the fashion of taking one's wife on *safari*, and white women have been making pleasure trips into Africa ever since.

So let him who would picture the scene of our first shooting camp on the shallow lip of the valley of the Inhasune banish from mind all thought of stoic denial. It is true that Cass had been suffering, but he was suffering no more. After the lunch hour on the previous day he had turned more than pale on being informed it was time to mount his horse —he had actually balked.

"What on earth's the matter, Charlie? Are you saddle-sick?"

"Saddle-sick? I'm *bleeding!*"

Within five minutes he had gained a thousand dollars' worth of knowledge and it is passed on here to all who read. Zinc-cured adhesive plaster, if slapped directly and generously on any abrasion of the skin, is an instantaneous restorative. Broken blisters on the heel—or elsewhere—are rendered miraculously painless and require no further attention, for the plaster will stick indefinitely through hot water and cold until it is deliberately stripped from the healed wound.

Behold the camp held in the indefinable suspense of the eve of the first shooting day. Two

tents and the kitchen fly are set on the arc of a wide circle. Within its hollow and beneath the heavy shadow of a domed tree stands the table, glittering with white cloth and silverware under the crossed rays of four hanging lanterns. The arc of the wide circle is continued into the night to left and right by the spaced garnet glow of the camp fires of the men. Against these low blurs of light are silhouetted exaggerated black torsos and close-clipped bullet heads. In the open are tethered Bertie, Cass's chestnut, and my horse, Hawthorne, milk-white against the curtain drop of the starlit sky. Near-by the table, Jack, the cook, voluble in four languages, crouches beside the tiny furnace from which will evolve a meal of astonishing proportions and intricacy. The guns have been taken from their cases and wiped of grease. The eye dilates to their dull gleam, shining from within the open doorway of the spare tent. Dinner comes and goes in silence. Our thoughts are all wrapped in five words, "To-morrow is the first day."

CHAPTER IV

THE FIRST DAY: WATERBUCK

Sample breakfast.—Field guns.—Photographing disabled game.—Two discoveries.—Etiquette of the start and retinue.—Reasons for a large following.—Disappearance of game after rain.—Infallible homing instinct of the black an illusion.—The arduous calling of a good horse boy.—Nervousness induced by hours on the gameless plains.—Memory selective.—Wildebeest sighted and pursued.—Sable seen and lost.—African kraal and women in general.—The kill at sundown.

BEFORE the mists of dawn have lifted from the plains we are up and dressed. The horses are munching the last of their corn as we sit down to a hearty breakfast—stewed prunes, bacon and eggs, tea, toast, and orange marmalade. On the spare table are laid the guns, a Rigby double-barreled Magnum .350 for Cass, backed by a Savage .250/3000, and for myself a .318 Accelerated Express magazine rifle, seconded by a 6.5 Mannlicher-

Schoenauer. There are two pocket-lunch packages, each containing four biscuits and a slab of chocolate; two water canteens, freshly filled; two stout canvas bags labeled "Standard Bank of South Africa," jingling, not with coin, but with cartridges sufficient for the day. In mine nestles also a battered tiny camera fitted with a Carl Zeiss lens.

This midget apparatus has shared my shooting trips for ten years without ever going to the repair shop. Its joints are so loose that every exposure becomes an exciting gamble and the result an ever-recurring miracle. It is so small that with no inconvenience whatever it may always be on the spot, for the little bag containing one's spare cartridges is invariably carried by the chief gun bearer, who is as invariably in on the spooring and at the kill.

Owing to this accessibility I have obtained certain game pictures which opened my eyes to two distinct discoveries. One is the fact that all photographs of live game purporting to be made by stalking without a gun should be accepted with a grain of salt and weighed against the reputation and standing of the taker. No microscopic examination of the pictures of sable bull and kudu cow shown in

these pages could betray that the animals were mortally wounded at the time of taking.

The other discovery was a tangible visualization of the profound peace which interposes between life and death at the moment when death becomes an immediate certainty. It was the illimitable calm pictured in the photographs mentioned above and in the face and eyes of the waterbuck shown with this chapter which first led me to an analysis of fear as an emotion inseparably dependent on distance of time or place, a theory that will be further elucidated in subsequent pages.

As the start for each day's shooting followed a fixed formula, it is just as well to describe it once and for all in detail. When the camp was contiguous to the shooting ground, we tossed a coin for choice of position to the right or left of a line projected directly into the wind. When the wind was wrong or the shooting grounds distant, the winner chose a locality and the loser took "the rest." Only two men can shoot big game successfully from a single camp.

Cass rode Bertie, a sturdy and gentle chestnut, and was accompanied by Magudogudo as chief tracker and gun bearer; Bongo, second gun bearer; a local guide who carried water bottle and any extras; English, the horse boy;

Quambe, a stalwart porter whose onerous duty it was to have the heavy Graflex camera always close to the scene of operations; and (on the first day only) Cass's personal servant, Mohamet, who was to act as interpreter.

My entourage was much the same except that it included no camera boy and utilized one of the porters, Five by name, for an interpreter. Madada and his father, Maoia, were my trackers, and Rungo was the syce who looked after Hawthorne. In addition, each of us was generally accompanied by a few porters.

What were the reasons for all this following? Ordinarily a man can go out on foot from a Panda camp with a single gun bearer and half a dozen carriers, shoot his meat allowance by ten o'clock, and return for a leisurely lunch and siesta, taking the field again at three o'clock for two hours of selective shooting. I say ordinarily, but what I mean is in time of drought. Too much emphasis cannot be put on the assertion that abundant rainfalls scatter game.

In December of 1916 I made a flying trip five hundred miles up the Zambesi to inspect the German internment camp located at Tete. I reached the famous shooting grounds of Bandar twenty-four hours after the first down-

pour of the season, and went ashore to try for anything at all in the way of fresh meat. For miles the ground was literally covered with spoor of six varieties of major antelope, but out of the thousands of indentations we saw during five hours of fast cross-country walking, not one had been made after the rain.

I was so impressed by this incident that a council of the hunting men of the region was called to the village where we were to spend the night, and at the end of much patient questioning I came to the conclusion that the apparent total disappearance of game after rain is merely a question of averages. Congregate a thousand head of antelope in a hundred thousand acres and they are easily found; disperse them over a million acres and each becomes a needle in a haystack. On my previous visit to the Inhasune the district had been almost totally parched and famine-stricken, but before Cass and I reached the scene of our first shooting camp we had passed innumerable water holes and one vast lake, which were the leavings of continuous downpours over a period of many months, all in addition to the permanent water systems which habitually divide the species common to Panda among a series of valleys.

The effects of the condition we found were twofold. The first was a tendency of the game to overflow from its usual haunts. The second was to establish the following as everyday's routine: a long ride until the fresh tracks of some desired beast was found by chance, then hours of spooring, perhaps a stalk, and certainly a long trek home at night.

For such work a horse is almost a necessity, and the trackers, however familiar they may be with a region, demand a local guide. The prevalent belief that the African native invariably has the homing instinct of a bee is an illusion. I have twice been lost for hours, even with local guides who were within ten miles of the spot where they were born and had lived all their lives. The greater efficiency of the black man over the white in returning to a given location is merely the measure of his superior woodcraft.

The presence of a horse presupposes the horse boy. These syces are a peculiar breed. They have no work except to attend each to a single mount, but, believe me, that is enough. To keep the horse fed, watered, and curried is the least of their duties. They are expected to accompany him at any pace, even through a long gallop, and, when one has dismounted,

to follow a spoor unerringly through the thick and thin of cover. I once spent six hours on my hands and knees in a lion thicket less than a mile in circumference. At the end of that time horse and horse boy emerged from the same hole that had given vent to the naked tracker and myself half an hour before. The saddle was scuffed, the blanket in shreds, the stirrup leathers detached, but, even so, I could scarcely credit my eyes. A good horse boy quails at nothing but darkness; he takes no gambles; he knows that a spoor cannot lie.

Breakfast over, Cass and I tossed a coin for position, and by the time the rayless rim of the rising sun showed above the low mist we were off along diverging lines. I was nervous. To stake one's reputation on conditions half across the world is a small matter, but to drag a friend ten thousand miles under present drawbacks of travel on the strength of your faith is a very serious business. Anxiety grew and grew as the hours passed. In memory these plains had been sprinkled with waterbuck, dotted with herds of wildebeest and sable, and enlivened by awkwardly galloping, rocking-horse reedbuck. Such was the picture I had drawn time and again for Cass's delectation, yet during five hours' riding not a liv-

ing thing save the cavalcade stirred, nor did the sound of a single shot cut the immeasurable wilderness to tell me that Cass was having better luck.

There is no activity in life which does not pall once it contains no surprises, and quite aside from the strictly emotional features of the pursuit of big game, hunting will hold its own as long as there is any unfenced country left because it is never wholly learned; it is forever springing some new lesson on the mind. My depiction of what was to be seen in the valley of the Inhasune had been absolutely honest, and reason as well as the statements of the trackers gave assurance that before many weeks had passed, Cass would have acquired the identical impression of an astonishing variety of game within a restricted area.

But just here I stumbled upon an old truth never before grasped—the truth that memory is always selective. When you look back you forget the long blanks and group high-lights, so that what you say to others and believe yourself inspires an exaggerated anticipation. This logic did not keep my heart from sinking to lower and lower depths until at ten o'clock it struck rock bottom, only to bounce immediately to the top notch of exhilaration at a

low whistle, a pause, and the whispered word, "Kongoni!"[1]

Tracker, local guide, the horse, horse boy and old Maoia, following with the second gun, stood as though carved in rock. The carriers in the rear squatted. I turned my head slowly and saw a troop of wildebeest like dots of ink against the lighter background of a far-away clump of trees. As I slipped from my horse the men sank slowly to their haunches beneath the level of the grass tops. Madada took the wind with a pinch of dust, found it unfavorable, and, bent double, started out swiftly along a line of cover. I followed closely on his heels, and after a long detour we threaded the wood before which the game had been standing, only to find that it had got the wind of the outfit we had left behind and gone away. Nothing daunted, Madada took up the easy spoor and followed it at a three-mile clip. An hour passed and still we were on the deep indentations of a galloping trail. Knowing wildebeest to be both lazy and curious, we were puzzled, and only late that night were we to learn that Cass had fired the single shot of a first long day at this same wary bunch.

[1] Further north kongoni means hartebeest; among the Thongas, it stands for the blue wildebeest.

We were discouraged and on the point of sitting down to wait for the horse, when Madada's form went suddenly rigid, with his head turned half to the right. His lips formed soundlessly the word, "Pala-pala!"

Following the direction of his glance into the shadows of a scattered wood, for a moment I saw nothing, then suddenly realized that I was staring a sable antelope in the face at not over a hundred yards. The animal stood slant-legged, half squatting, as a horse does at the instant before he whirls. Its head was held low, showing the mighty sweep of the scythe-like horns, and its eyes stared weirdly from behind the two patches of dazzling white which streaked its jet-black face. I threw up my gun, aimed and was about to press the trigger when Madada, trained even against the strong pull of native greed for fresh meat, murmured dutifully, "*Aicona le madoda*" ("that's not the bull"), and even as he whispered the wood became alive with plunging forms that faded away almost instantaneously, leaving the impression of a single flash of black and white.

We took up the new spoor and followed it at so swift a pace that we came upon the band while they were still moving, and, the dis-

covery being mutual and simultaneous, the sable went away again on another long spurt. Madada was showing the persisting fault of his youth; being an amazingly expert tracker, he could read a spoor that was all but invisible to others at astonishing speed, and when on such an open road as is made by wildebeest, eland, or sable it was almost impossible to get him to slow down to a crawl before running into the quarry.

Being admonished to go *gashly* in the self-same words used time and again in years gone by, he nodded his head sadly, and once more we took up the long, stern chase through wood, milala palm flats, and dipping *vleis* until, at the high heat of the day, we came out on a vast sweep of rolling country and saw the herd grazing at three hundred yards with not a feather of cover in between. Even in the open it was impossible for me to distinguish the bull from his harem of thirty long-horned cows, until Madada picked him out by his slightly darker coat.

It was a hopelessly long shot for a near-sighted man, but it had to be tried, and we both listened disconsolately to the unmistakable high song of a bullet which goes over and away. Once more the sable traveled and this

time in dead earnest. I sat down on an ant-hill in the half shade of an izonzo tree, took out my stalking glass, and watched the closely bunched, galloping herd rise and fall, rise and fall in a steadily diminishing blur until the far horizon cut it definitely from view.

"What's the matter with the game this year?" I asked Madada.

"Lion," he answered, promptly, and went on to tell of such a plague of lions as had not been heard of in those parts for many a day.

In all my years of shooting I have never got over the feeling that a shot at visible game is going to take but a few minutes. You sight the quarry, slip from your horse, take a few steps, and then after perhaps three hours of steady slogging wake up suddenly to the fact that lunch, water bottle, and even smokes have been left miles behind.

That was what happened in this instance. We waited for what seemed a long time under the izonzo and then made our way to a near-by kraal and stretched our tired limbs under the welcome thick shade of a mafureira. There were no men about, only women, and after a single glance at us they went steadily about their outdoor housekeeping. Watching them lazily at their crude tasks, it was hard to

realize that the huts, apparently so carelessly placed, the beaten and clean-swept circular court, the ponderous homemade wooden mortars and clay pots, the three shade trees and as many cooking fires, the rubbish heap, and even the ragged hedge of dead thorn branches which surrounded the primitive establishment, were not the simple picknicking arrangement they appeared to be on the surface, but fairly reeked with formality, ritual, and a symbolism so ancient and complex as to make our rules of home-building child's play by comparison.

One thinks and speaks lightly of the freedom of the savage, and while it is quite true that one side of his existence carries him carefree through an open physical world whose possession may be whole-heartedly coveted by the best of us, there is a reverse to the picture that only a few inquiring minds have begun to penetrate and which depicts the uncouth Kaffir as threading an astonishingly intricate maze of taboos, prescriptions, continencies, and superstitions from the moment he says farewell to childhood, through the years of his strength until he comes inexorably to an abandoned old age and the day of his miserable death, for the Kaffir despises weakness whatever its source and derides all suffering.

Where civilization has not touched him he lives and dies by laws so hoary with age and so fixed that they seem to deny their human origin and to stand menacingly aloof from the individual, as devoid of the quality of mercy as a rock or a thorn tree.[1]

We think of Africa as being populated by a more or less homogeneous mass of black races, and nothing could be farther from the truth. Through many districts, every tribe and almost every kraal is a separate ant hill built on the foundation of self-interest and communal property, and all single-taxers and enemies of individual vested rights are invited to inspect an experiment which has gone on for more centuries than history records. Woven into the very fiber of this infinitely divided social fabric one finds the idea of woman, not as a chattel as is so generally supposed, but as the inalienable property of the family.

The Thonga woman may be a slave pure and simple in the common acceptance of the term, but, nevertheless, she is not subject in practice to barter unless she or her parents were taken in battle. In other words, once

[1] "Those who have studied the characteristics of savage life are always struck by its deadly conservatism, its needless restraints on the freedom of the individual, and its hopeless routine." "The Mind in the Making," by James Harvey Robinson.

sold, she can be inherited, but never bought. She is at once coveted and despised, treasured and abused, humored and worked to death, and yet she does not inspire pity, nor does it occur to her to pity herself. The reason is that woman as an essence is as irrepressible as she is universal; even wearing the chain and ball of African usage, she remains the background of almost every dance and song. Catching her eye, one either senses or imagines a smoldering gleam that jeers at man and all his domineering ways, and takes actual pride in an appearance of humility sheathing the scythe-like claw of sex.

Such weighty thoughts did not prevent thirst from increasing with every passing moment of the hot noon hour, until I threw caution to the winds and took a long drink of water, unboiled and unfiltered, but cool, from a leaf-covered Kaffir pot. The sight of Madada munching mandioc roasted in the embers of a near-by fire awoke the pangs of hunger, and, commandeering the next slim root he fished from the ashes, I peeled the crisp skin, poisonous until it has been subjected to heat, and filled my stomach with the bread which is the staff of African as well as of South American life. Feeling reinforced

and remembering the meatless camp, we started out again and made into the wind, irrespective of how far that course might lead us from home.

In spite of the premonitions aroused by the presence of much water, it was confusing to a mind which thought it knew all the rules for shooting in the Inhasune country and subscribed with many another man's to the theory that one should complete one's morning hunt by ten and supplement it by a two-to-three-hour turn in the afternoon, to find that dogged spooring was to be the order of the day. Furthermore, weary, footsore, and longing for tobacco, it was highly disconcerting to recall certain things said and emphasized to Cass about the marvelous tracking powers of the horse boy—how you could travel where you would, even through the endless sea of gray elephant bush, and find horse, local guide, and the accessories of comfort in their charge at your beck and call almost before the echo of your shot had died away.

Once more Madada came upon a moderately fresh spoor, this time of waterbuck, and we were off at his accustomed swinging pace. We crossed a corner of the vast plain over which the sable had disappeared into the hazy

distance and entered a lovely region of park-like country broken by blots of domed trees which upon approach opened a succession of vistas one so like another that each seemed an exact replica of all its predecessors; yet one had the sensation of following a lane with many turnings. Who knew if, on rounding the next promontory of towering shadow, we should not come upon some moist dip amid the unbroken expanse of the level prairie where game would be congregated in one of those unforgettable group pictures never seen by this generation save in the faintly scratched wilds of Africa?

The sun was fast sinking in the west; it was five o'clock, and at half past the shooting light would cease almost as though at the ringing of a gong, precluding inexorably overtime work for huntsman or tracker. I began to think disconsolately of the miles and miles we were from camp, sixteen at the very least, and of the empty-handed footslogging they would entail. My eyes had almost lost interest in the disheartening stillness of the wilderness and were fastened automatically on Madada's heels, when he stopped so suddenly that it was difficult to avoid a collision with his back.

We stood on the verge of a large shallow

basin in the center of which was a pool veiled by high reeds and sentineled by a single giant crane. I stared, almost paralyzed in the daze of a dream come true. Not two hundred yards away a scattered herd of heavy-shouldered wildebeest regarded us curiously, while three awkward reedbuck galloped across their rear, uttering their shrill, weird, whistling cry. I came to, threw up my gun, and was taking aim when ear and eye caught simultaneously the rush and the blur of a great gray form on my left. The rifle swung swiftly, almost as though by its own volition, until it covered the new mark. The crack of the shot seemed to telescope into the phlug! of the bullet as it found its mark, so nearly simultaneous were the two sounds.

The plunging quarry, a fine bull waterbuck, slowed suddenly, sank to his knees, settled, and turned his head to gaze mildly at us. Where the wildebeest had been standing was only a cloud of dust, golden yellow in the light of the sinking sun. Along the far rim of the *vlei* the reedbuck still galloped, and in midair the crane towered high, then, with his long legs pointing back like a rudder, drifted lazily off in a straight descending line.

"*Piva*," said Madada, with a greedy grin,

as he placed his foot on the fat, round rump of the fallen waterbuck.

This splendid animal is commonly found in groups of from three to seven, and rarely in herds numbering as high as fifteen. As its name implies, it frequents watercourses and reed swamps, but wanders far and wide over adjoining plains. Of all antelope, its habits and appearance most closely resemble those of domestic kine, and on many an early morning I have amused myself with an illusion of cattle in a pasture at home until a breath of tainted air has galvanized the recumbent herd into the lyre-horned, thick-necked pride of the African wilds.

We measured the horns of my bull and found them not a record by some inches, but still fairly representative and beautifully symmetrical, which is as much as can be hoped for nowadays when one shoots not only against the accumulated efforts of hunters of three generations, but against the thousands of heads of various game picked up by natives during the decimation of the rinderpest and subsequently sold to collectors and published at the head of statistical lists to the discouragement of all genuine huntsmen. I traced the lines of incision for the removal of the

mask, and emphasized, as always, the cut far back on the shoulders to get plenty of flap.

"I know, I know," murmured Madada again and again, and finally looked at me reproachfully and asked, "Have you forgotten?" And I laughed at myself for trying to teach him anything about skinning a head. He fell to work.

"*Le hanshi*" ("The horse"), he said presently, without glancing up.

Of all the surprises of the varied day this was the most welcome, that one should look up to see horse, horse boy, local guide, and old Maoia approaching at leisurely pace on the spoor they had been doggedly following since ten o'clock in the morning. Here was vindication coming with its arms full of warm gifts to shame faint-hearted faith. In the calm which follows swiftly on success after long suspense it was easy to measure the eager speed at which Madada had been working the various spoors of the day and to realize that at its worst the outfit had scarcely been an hour in the rear. On the great plain we had crossed just after the noontide rest, had we looked back, we would have seen it trailing us at its proper distance across the open.

A chill was already in the air, though the

sun was not quite set. I slipped on my coat, mounted, and lit my pipe with such feelings as only the thoroughly initiated in all the sensations of the veldt can appreciate. Madada, even aided by the carriers, still had half an hour's work to do, and Rungo, the horse boy, declaring that he could find his way home without assistance, we started out, accompanied only by Maoia.

Evening fell upon us suddenly, like a soft, dark blanket. My horse, Hawthorne, was a rangy, milk-white gelding. Moving evenly through the darkness above the tops of the short dry grass, his snowy body must have seemed a ghostly apparition to the denizens of the wilds, and presently from all sides began to sound the shrill, rasping whistle of startled and curious reedbuck. The familiarity of that cry had haunted me from its first hearing years ago. What was it like? Why did it strike the chord of home and childhood? Now, in the concentration of the senses which comes to one among velvety shadows under starlit skies, it suddenly disclosed itself as first cousin to the jeering call of the barnyard catbird. No sooner was the discovery made than the chorus ceased, as if it had accomplished its object. A palpable stillness fell

upon us and seemed to spread and spread through the night.

Only he who has been foster-cradled in the saddle knows to the full the rest it can bring to limbs bone tired from all day walking. To puff luxuriously at one's pipe and sway more and more drowsily to the even undulations of Hawthorne's swinging stride was to feel peace and happiness descend like a warm mantle, as though to put the soul to sleep and tuck it in for the night. Already the day, which during the anxious course of its many blank hours had seemed a monstrous disillusionment, began to take on the mark of a great red letter under the touch of the selective alchemy of memory. Wildebeest in the distance, the black and white flash of sable, the rocking-horse gallop of reedbuck, and the satisfying climax of the fallen waterbuck crowded to the fore in vision and blotted out all the emptinesses of the wilderness. Mile after mile drifted by pleasantly on the bosom of the vast silence. Rungo grunted. Ahead was the calling gleam of the far-away lights of camp.

CHAPTER V

WILDEBEEST, BUFFOON OF THE PLAINS

Chairs and royalty.—The interpreter as a symbol.—Cass's first day.—The indaba with the trackers.—Planning the itinerary.—The augury of bones.—Madada as orator.—The start.—Wildebeest sighted and lost.—Found again.—The stalk and the shot.—Trading blood for wine.—Wildebeest nearest prototype of bison.—Stalking for pictures.—Racing the herd.

FOR fifteen years I have invariably included in my traveling outfit a two-piece hammock chair long enough to accommodate six feet of tired bone and muscle at any angle down to the very verge of the horizontal. Such a chair was with me when with Selwyn I crossed the Macua country in charge of a tribal king, Ititi Muno by name. On a night during which the war drums of a near-by kraal threatened continuously he slept on it between our tents, and in the morning, after dressing himself in full regalia, approached me, accompanied by an interpreter.

The presence of an interpreter has a peculiar significance on the East Coast quite independent of the function of translation; often he is employed merely to dignify a request or lend solemnity to a decree. Your cook, with whom you have conversed freely for years, will appear with an interpreter when he wants a raise or wishes to accuse the *picannin*, his assistant, of theft. Consequently I was prepared for something out of the usual when Itiiti Muno, who spoke Portuguese well, had recourse to an intermediary. He asked that the wonderful chair be presented to him forthwith.

My face filled with sorrowful regret, and I replied as follows: "Tell Itiiti Muno that, had he asked for the chair only last evening, I would have given it to him gladly as one gives an old slipper, but, now that royalty has slept in it, never shall I part with it. Out of respect it will be kept for myself and my children's children."

Itiiti Muno, who had a predominating strain of Arab blood, was one of the handsomest specimens of manhood I have ever met. He wore an embroidered skull cap that was like a crown, and his curling beard, erect carriage, and flowing robes, no less than his flashing glance, gave him a Jovian air. On hearing

my answer his eyes sparkled with instant humor and crinkled into crow's feet at the corners. Without uttering a word, he approached and patted me on the shoulder as one who would say, "You will do!"

Two such chairs accompanied Cass and myself. With my secretary's bag they formed the advance loads intrusted to two of the fleetest porters, and were the first burden to be unlashed at the end of a march and the last to be packed at the striking of camp. Every evening, after the bath and dinner and dressed in our warmest tweeds, we would sit enthroned upon them for a lazy hour which was the accolade of rest on a hard day. Sometimes their backs would be inclined to throw our eyes easily against the stars; sometimes they were erect as we sat upright, intent upon the council, the indaba, or watching the ceremony of the rolling of the bones.

Thirteen hours between meals, broken only by four biscuit and a slab of chocolate, is a long stretch. It never occurred to us to ask questions as to the luck of the chase until the ceremony of washing up and the negotiation of an enormous dinner had been completed. Then came sick parade and immediately thereafter two tots of whisky, two pipes, the two

chairs, and finally the interchange of things seen and done. There was nothing premeditated about this procedure; it just happened so from the first day.

"What did you get, Charlie?"

"Nothing."

"Did you draw an absolute blank?"

"Oh no. First thing out of camp I saw a black *mamba* about eight feet long. Mohamet shouted at me and I thought he said, 'Kill it,' but the way the boys yelled when I got off the horse, I guess he meant the snake would kill me. We gave it a miss. The next thing was a reedbuck, but I wouldn't shoot. Hours after that we came on a herd of wildebeest and I got a shot. We found a light blood spoor and followed it for miles until we came on your tracks and saw you had taken it over. Then we cruised around and stumbled on a duiker just killed by a leopard that hadn't had time even to rip it open."

"That was luck. Did you go after the leopard?"

Pause. "No."

"Why not?"

"I couldn't make the trackers understand."

"What do you mean? What was the matter with Mohamet?"

My mind flew back to the engagement of Mohamet as Cass's personal servant two weeks before. I had explained that every Swahili servant is trained in exactly the same way and that all we needed to know was whether the boy spoke English. I had asked him, and he had replied glibly and with no sign of an accent: "Oh yes, Master. Very well indeed."

"You remember what Mohamet said when you asked him if he spoke English?" murmured Cass now. "Well, that and, 'Kill! Kill!' is every word of English he knows."

For two weeks this boy had obeyed promptly every command issued to him, and we sat for a long time in silence, appalled at the guile with which his father, Jack, the cook, and my old stand-by, Edy, had calculated that they would be near enough to murmur translations to Mohamet until we were so deeply involved with the wilds that it would be impossible to sack him.

This incident served to lift him from the neutral tints of an automaton into the limelight. He became a person and disclosed himself subsequently as the most lackadaisical, supercilious, and unruffled individual in our entire following, who would greet a shower of

curses with a smile of ineffable peace which was nothing short of maddening until it finally betrayed him to a tragic fate over which we shall laugh to our dying hour. Never by any chance was he ready to start with the *safari*, but a day of reckoning was in store for him when we were to take a weekly train which did not wait upon his whimsies.

Breaking into our revery appeared Magudogudo, Madada, Bongo, and Maoia, ready for the nightly *indaba*—the consultation which not only reviews the luck of the day, but establishes the nature and many of the details of the campaign of the morrow, so that no part of the precious early hours shall be lost. Mats were brought for the trackers and they were granted the privilege of squatting tailor fashion before us on covered ground, while behind them were grouped, standing, the remaining members of the strictly hunting fraternity; local chief, local guides, gun bearers, certain special retainers of our huntsmen, and anyone bringing news of sporting interest. We were still on the threshold of our shoot and we wished to get the fullest possible data on the lay of the entire region in relation to the probable location of the special heads we were after, and also to impress on the trackers the

order in which we wished to tackle the various game.

The faces of the four huntsmen presented an interesting study at any time, but most especially during these conferences when they were alight with attention and expression. All of them had a peculiarly Mongolian type of countenance with high, prominent cheek bones; deeply indented temples; flat but thin-winged noses; long, stringy, drooping mustaches, and eyes which met those of the observer with a level, fearless gaze. Their intelligence was far above that of the average Kaffir and they had been so frequently in contact with the white man that they had acquired some appreciation of his directness and, at least in matters of the chase, would sometimes respond readily to a leading question without the usual interminable palaver in the Socratic method. Even so, it must not be imagined that they could be rushed into any statement of fact.

The interpreter having taken his position and the usual questions of courtesy and salutation being summarily disposed of, I made a start with the following opening gambit. "Tell Magudogudo that he is undoubtedly a great hunter. The fact is so well established that all the game have talked among them-

selves about his coming and have withdrawn to parts unknown."

"*Que!*" exclaims Magudogudo. His face lights up with appreciation of the humor, and during the general laugh he clasps the hand of his life-long friend, Maoia, and sways it to and fro. This peculiar handshake does not have the significance of a greeting, as with us, but expresses merely agreement or mutual satisfaction. The two friends are the only *makhehla* in our large party; that is, they are the only wearers of the *shidlodlo*, the highly polished crown of black wax which is a symbol of dignified maturity and immunity from ever carrying a load. It gives them the distinction of a halo.

"We know," I continued through the interpreter, "that Magudogudo and Maoia have undoubtedly rolled the bones, that they have already cast the lot of this *safari* and have seen whether the miserable *'mpunzi* is to cross the way of the great *'njovu*, and whether the shell representing the white-man hunter still stands among the overturned shells of the game. We know that they have read how many *piva*, *kongoni*, *pala-pala*, and *mpofo* shall be dead on the plains and in the forest. What does Magudogudo say?"

The eyes not only of the trackers, but of all their retinue, study our faces shrewdly to see whether we are making fun of this most treasured of all native accomplishments, the forecasting of fortune by the skillful reading of omens. Seeing us quite grave and intent on an answer, the faces of Maoia and Magudogudo take on an added dignity beneath the solemn and respectful gaze of all their retainers. The old men are proud of their reputation with the divinatory bones, of their skill at reading accurately the complicated ritual of the dozen concave shells cast from both hands on an open mat where all the assembly may comment upon and criticize freely their interpretation. They look at one another as though in silent consultation, and finally Magudogudo says, with serene faith in his prediction:

"The *mulungo* speaks truly; we have read the bones and have seen that if the *mulongo* holds the gun straight the game will fall."

We ponder this reply for a moment, and then, with added respect for the brain behind the bones, proceed directly to the business of the meeting. It is necessary to establish our itinerary so that there will be no needless travel with loads or retracing of long marches. If Magudogudo, setting out on a journey,

wished to see first wildebeest, then sable, eland, inyala, lion, and finally elephant in the exact order named, how would he walk, which places would he visit, where would he set his camps?

Madada was the youngest by far of the triumvirate of trackers, and it was to become more and more noticeable, as the trip progressed, that whenever decision or action was called for the older men immediately turned to him. This deference was not due altogether to his knowledge of the country or his reputation as a fearless and skillful reader of spoor, but followed the Kaffir usage which puts a high premium on youth and strength. Children are both seen and heard; they boss their parents about, show a scant respect for their elders in general, and frankly despise old age accompanied by failing powers. The first to starve in a kraal in times of famine are the aged and helpless.

Madada took upon himself without hesitation the burden of answering the white man's question. He was dressed from the hips up in a thin white jersey which clung to his slim torso, emphasizing its slenderness and the length of his arms. He was a born orator, and began slowly and in a low voice, which gradually increased in power as his gestures grew

wider, until, drawing his left elbow level with the shoulder and extending his right arm to its full length, he took the pose of one about to shoot an arrow, and with chin, eyes, and both hands all in one eloquent alignment carried the imagination of his hearers to a sequence of pictured horizons. As he named each locality famous as the resort of some species of major game the thumb and finger of his left hand would snap with the crack of a percussion cap. He pointed only with doubled fist or drooping hand or by his entire pose; never by any chance did he extend the index finger, as to aim it at a person even inadvertently is to incur the risk of a lawsuit.

Waterbuck we had killed and wildebeest we knew to be near by; we should have our fill of them on the morrow. For sable we should move camp to 'Npushanyane, and, failing them there, we later would find them haunting the flats at Miquel, the meadows of the Nhampala-pala or the plains about Gcokwane. Eland and kudu wandered in the izonzo forests of Mecokane and Chipaleca, inyala thronged in the thickets around his father's kraal of Maoia, lion were everywhere, and these were the names of elephant bush and water: Gumbo, Cubine, and Mangunhane;

the Nyagulaze, the Nyamekelengue, and the deep pool of Chitole. He understood the reason of our wishing to try out ourselves and our guns on the facile wildebeest and undertook to lead us to the meat on the morrow.

Thus in a single paragraph did the interpreter sum up what Madada had taken a full quarter of an hour to say in a rapid rhythmic singsong of which we could understand at first hand only the eloquent sweeping gestures and a familiar word here and there. Watching the flickering changes of expression in his eyes and face and the intent attention paid to everything he said by his understanding hearers, we could do no less than sigh for the imagery, the narrative, and the lore which went by the board in the laconic translation. Promises were exchanged to be up and ready by the break of dawn, and the retinue of hunters withdrew at the word of dismissal, "Longile—all right, it is arranged."

Half an hour before sunrise of the following day we started out with what seemed an absurdly large cortege; the two horse boys, English and Rungo; Five, the interpreter, and Quambe, the carrier of the big camera; four trackers; two local guides; and eight men to bring in meat—a total of twenty, including

ourselves. In spite of its size the expedition moved in absolute silence through the misty gray light of the early morning, Madada and Magudogudo in the van, followed closely by ourselves on horseback. The country was flat and apparently open, but in detail it was thickly sprinkled with sharply divided qualities of cover. First we moved among groups of large trees, then through grass bordering a series of elongated pools of water, some of them harboring a black duck, spur-winged geese, herons, a sort of cormorant, and scattered groups of the snowy ibis. It was noticeable that a pool contained either none or all of these species, with scarcely a variation in the assortment of bird life. Immediately beyond the chain of water holes we entered a region dotted with the milala palm, which, owing to the fact that it is the source of sura, the favorite wine of the country, seldom is allowed to attain a height of more than eight or nine feet.

It took us the best part of an hour to thread its interminable maze, and then, just as we glimpsed the possibility of a wide-open plain beyond a tree-covered rise, a low whistle from one of the carriers far in the rear stopped us in our tracks. Madada crept forward to recon-

noiter and presently returned to report a lone wildebeest bull standing breast high in an otherwise unbroken sea of grass. We had slipped from our horses, and by this time all our following had sunk from sight as silently and thoroughly as a covey of partridges. Putting the near-by tree-topped rise directly between ourselves and the quarry, we advanced into its cover, leaving it to Magudogudo and Madada to spy from the edge of the wood and decide upon the best route for a stalk, as we wished to get near enough for one of us to photograph and the other to shoot.

Advancing cautiously to the very limit of the cover, the two trackers took off their hats and projected their bare heads inch by inch beyond the respective bushes they had chosen until each had a full view of the clear plain. Thus they crouched for a long time, and then Madada came to us with the statement that the bull must be lying down asleep, or, to use the native idiom, he had "*gone lala.*" We were delighted with the news and had visions of ourselves crawling to within fifty or perhaps thirty yards of our prey, as the wind was steady and strong; but one insistent question after another as to the exact locality the wildebeest had chosen for his morning nap elicited

only the vaguest replies. We stood around, growing more and more impatient, and gradually all the trackers and some of the carriers gathered around us, one of the latter finally reporting that the bull had trotted off some minutes before and had gone to a neighboring *vlei* to visit his wives.

Such astonishing and circumstantial statements are very frequent in dealing with Kaffirs through an interpreter, and it is often a question whether they are due to the imagination of the medium or to that of the original informant; however that may be, they are seldom laughed at by the trackers, and the more extravagant they seem to be in far-fetched deduction the more gravely they are received. Without taking the trouble to pick up the spoor of the vanishing bull, the entire *safari* started off for the vague spot where he was supposed to have gone to call upon his consorts. We were skeptical to say the least, and as it presently developed that our objective was some miles away, our tempers began to rise and we started to experiment with facetious remarks cast in such simple form that they would not entirely lose their sting in translation.

We were on the verge of calling a halt in

what seemed a ludicrous enterprise when we came to the edge of a vast open plain, and the trackers with pleased grins on their faces pointed with raised chins to the vagrant bull standing in full view at a distance of from seven to eight hundred yards. They made no reference to the fact that there were no wives in evidence, and we were too pleasantly surprised at the sight of game to quibble over the omission. We dismounted, surveyed the possibilities for a successful stalk, and found every condition highly unfavorable. Between us and the bull was an almost grassless flat half a mile wide and broken by a single tree. It was out of the question to make a long detour to come upon him from the other side, both because of the time such a journey would consume and because of the position of the wind.

Having learned by long experience that three out of five wildebeest shot are killed through their abnormal curiosity, I suggested to Cass that he take his gun and I the large telephoto camera, and that, placing the single tree between us and the bull, we walk straight at him up the wind, the rest of the *safari* remaining in hiding. For lack of a better, this plan was put into effect. The wildebeest saw

us from the moment we stepped out into the open plain, the single tree serving only as a partial blind; however, he stood like a rock, and apparently nothing short of an earthquake would have persuaded him to move until he should get a clear enough view of us to determine exactly what we were or otherwise convince himself that we were out for his blood.

I have walked up on wildebeest frequently in this manner, and have learned that the one essential is to keep a perfectly straight line with the tree, never showing the head or entire body even for an instant. Taking everything in our stride in the way of hummocks, holes, and an occasional bush, we walked rapidly to the tree and stopped directly behind it for a full minute to get our breath; then the camera deployed two paces to the right and the gun to the left. The conditions were such that the bull appeared to be much nearer than he actually was; he stood out like a black blot against the gray and pale gold of the open plain, and the fact that we had walked down on him over a quarter of a mile also had its psychological effect on our senses. Cass fired as he heard the click of the shutter, making a hit at what afterward proved to be just over

three hundred and fifteen yards, and with his second barrel made a beautiful running shot, dropping the wounded bull in his tracks.

Horse boys and hunters emerged promptly from hiding, gathered rapidly about the carcass, and presently Magudogudo, being Cass's chief tracker, leaned over and tied one hair of the long bushy tail in a loose knot. This trifling ceremony was performed so unostentatiously that it took place many times with subsequent heads of game before we awoke to the fact that it must have some peculiar significance. Our first guess was that it was done merely to identify ownership of the various trophies, but upon bringing the subject up casually at one of the nightly *indabas* we learned that it was a rite of considerable importance, as, should it be omitted, the meat would do harm to those who ate it!

The wildebeest was an especially good specimen, and, having given careful instructions for the stripping of the mask, we left the carcass in the hands of the eight carriers to be skinned, quartered, and carried to camp. As we were about to start on, a native hurried up to make us a present of a gourd full of sura wine, sweet and light as fresh cider and still holding the chill of early morning, although the sun had

been making things hot for us for more than two hours. We drank our fill, gave what was left to the trackers, and then rewarded the native by filling his gourd with half-coagulated blood from the wildebeest and giving him in addition a handful of entrails. Both parties to the transaction were highly satisfied, and, the day being yet young, we decided to try for a few snapshots with the camera alone.

As is often the case when one has succeeded in taking a single head after long search and hard work, we promptly began coming upon blue wildebeest by the half dozen and the score. In reality they are of a slate-gray color, marked by deeper transverse stripes verging on black, and with black faces, manes, and tails. They are easily the most conspicuous animal in the Inhasune country, both by reason of their numbers and the fact that in the distance they appear to be of a uniform jet-black color. A lone bull such as the one we had killed is the exception, because the wildebeest is so socially inclined that when, by reason of failing strength, he is driven out of his own community, he immediately takes up with any of the group antelopes such as waterbuck, sassaby, or impala, or with a drove of zebra.

Wildebeest form the nearest living prototype to the herds of bison which once blackened our own prairies. They are not nearly as heavy, but they are built so thickly around the head and shoulders that one loses sight of their insignificant hindquarters and gets an exaggerated impression of their weight and power. In the Panda district they are usually found in herds numbering from ten to thirty and when startled go off at a swinging trot, which at a shot develops into a mad gallop with heads hung low in the best style of the bison, and raising a mighty cloud of dust. They are as fleet as any horse and possess an astonishing vitality, so much so that unless mortally wounded or completely crippled by the first shot the following of a blood spoor is conceded to be an almost hopeless undertaking.

Even a broken foreleg may mean many weary hours and miles of unsuccessful pursuit, and I have known of a case where a running female was pierced through and through by eleven solids before succumbing. It is hard to determine whether it is a sense of immunity and confidence in their speed which makes them stand so frequently to their own undoing or mere stupid curiosity, but anyone who

has watched them perform, as they occasionally do, whirling on one leg and gyrating their long tails while their weird faces retain a look of wall-eyed solemnity, cannot fail to think of them as the buffoons of the plains, remembering many a whole-hearted laugh at their antics.

Shortly after leaving the fallen bull we came on quite a herd, and while they watched the rest of our outfit Cass made a careful stalk from one milala palm to another and succeeded in taking a picture at a hundred and fifty yards. Thinking that the herd might be circled on horseback and driven close past the camera for a snapshot, I mounted Hawthorne and after a long detour in the bush broke through into the plain at a point which I thought would put me to windward, but misjudged my distance by about forty yards.

The lead was more than enough for the wildebeest; they started up wind at a terrific pace, and while it was hopeless from the first to try to turn them, Hawthorne had developed so instantly the spirit of the battle charger that I could do no less than give him his head. For nearly half a mile we thundered down the open, almost breast to breast

with the galloping herd, and as it plunged in a solid mass under the low-hanging branches of a fringe of izonzo trees I had all I could do to bring the horse to his haunches in time to save myself from repeating a certain chapter in biblical history. From that time on Hawthorne never saw wildebeest without snorting, prancing, and otherwise showing keenness for a sport quite new in his experience.

As we had not shot at the herd, the trackers expressed the opinion that we could easily come up with it again, and after only half an hour's spooring we sighted a group of five while our outfit was still under cover. The camera was again brought into play and a picture of the small troop secured as it was just trotting off at not over seventy yards. From that day wildebeest began to be a drug on the market, and it was possible to go out from almost any of our camps and secure one or two for the larder without much trouble.

At first thought, it would seem that so stupid a beast would fall an easy prey to lion, but it should be remembered that, while these idiots of the plains show a tendency to hang around longer than is good for them where man is concerned, they invariably have one of their number on watch, and no carnivora, save

possibly the hunting leopard, is a match for them in speed once they get started. The lion especially is not fast over a distance, and depends on his first rush and spring to secure his prey; were it otherwise there would be few antelope left in Africa.

CHAPTER VI

HOUSEHOLD MATTERS

The mysterious white man.—The kick of garnered cane juice.—A paradoxical pioneer.—Plenty of lions, but no gun.—Living expenses, ten dollars per annum.—Jack's letter and a premonition of trouble.—The food capacity of a safari.—Vituperation as an art.—The eclipse of an ancient custom before the shibboleth of the almighty dollar.—Exchange in the wilds.—Two classic examples of the joke formula.—Moiassa, triumphant feminist.—Jack to the rescue.—Jack drunk.—Jack on witchcraft.—Jack, generic emblem of the culinary guild.—Jack as philosopher.—Edy-bin-Feraje.—Jack's "morning after."

JUST after the lunch hour we came upon fresh spoor of sable, and as Magudogudo was its discoverer he started off on it with Cass at his heels, followed by the rest of his outfit, while I headed toward camp with my contingent, wishing to arrive early, as we had been working such long hours in the field that

certain matters of housekeeping usually attended to at sundown had been sadly neglected. Furthermore, on the previous day we had received a handsome present consisting of tomatoes, pawpaws, and a bunch of bananas from a mysterious white man located far off near the flats of Miquel. It transpired that the long trek after wildebeest had carried us within a short distance of his kraal and a short detour would enable me to pay him a visit of courtesy.

His establishment was situated on the flat crest of a wind-swept rise which descended rapidly to a narrow valley containing a small pond and a sea of brilliant green. The mystery was solved with that first glimpse; the exile could only be one of those publicans of the wilds who by paying a license fee of approximately thirty pounds sterling for each acre under cultivation acquire the right to sell a vile drink known as "sope" and which is nothing more than the juice of crushed sugar cane left to its own devices. Distillation of any substance whatsoever for beverage purposes is strictly prohibited by law throughout the Province of Mozambique, and it is difficult to understand why the line should be drawn short of this simple extract, which by

being poured into a barrel never quite emptied immediately acquires a kick equal to that of the hardest cider.

Contrary to native usage, the kraal was built in the form of a large square, every inch of which was kept scrupulously clean. The dozen huts were widely spaced and ranked around what we would call a summer house, provided with benches and a small dining table. Into this refuge from the sun my host led me. He was a small, thin-chested man dressed in a thread-worn long overcoat a size too small for his frail figure, which was the very contradiction of all one's ideas of the build of the pioneer. His dark face lit up with a radiant smile of welcome as he saw me, but when he was addressed in Portuguese he answered in English. He told me that he was a Greek and had once exercised the trade of stoker on steamers plying to New York, where he had learned to "spik" American. His last voyage had taken place nearly twenty years before.

He stated that his kraal was located far from any traveled road, and as a consequence he rarely saw a white man oftener than once in eight or ten months, and then it was generally his partner, who came from Inharrime,

many miles away, to settle up accounts. In the center of the wide, beaten court of the kraal was a single large tree, and under it a simple crushing mill of American manufacture in which he took much pride, as after many years of service it was as good as new. The motive power was supplied by six "boys" and seven women pushing a long transverse beam which rotated a central capstan. Other women fed the cane into the mill and the juice poured out into a sunken pan which, when filled, was taken out and emptied into a barrel that stood in a strong-room near by. Grinding took place in direct proportion to demand, as "sope" will not keep; a few days give it the kick of a mule and at the end of a week it goes sour. The Greek was selling it at an escudo per gourd, which meant in our money about fifteen cents for two gallons of liquor.

He offered me tea sweetened with wild honey and bread made of mandioc by his strapping mulatto serving girl, but did not suggest a trial of the "sope." He said he never touched it himself and decried its abuse by the natives, but added, with a shrug of his shoulders, that they only bought from him when they were too lazy to brew their own concoctions. His great worry was that his

girl would leave him, frightened away by lions. Only a week before he had come out of his hut at night, with his favorite dog cowering between his legs, when there had been a rush, a crunch, and he had been hurled into the air while the dog was snatched away from under him. He had crawled back into the hut and lain awake until the first light of dawn, so that he could go out and erase the lion spoor before anyone else should see it. He did not possess a gun.

I asked him if he was happy. He sat in smiling silence for a moment, and then said: "I buy tea from outside; nothing else. You see, I have no sugar; I pay the natives seven cents for enough honey to last me eight months. Everything else grows. I have not figured it out, but it cannot cost me more than ten dollars a year in cash to live. I have been in many countries in my life, but here it is different; here I am very alone and I am happy." He had heard of the World War as we at home hear of an eruption of Pavlof Mountain; he said gravely but rather vaguely that it must have been a terrible thing. When asked how he learned that we were in the vicinity he produced an extraordinary letter, a mixture of French, English, Portuguese, Swahili, and

Landin, from our excellent cook, Jack-bin-Dafur, giving the impression that two officials of the American government of little less than Cabinet rank were sojourning near by, inclosing money and ordering a demijohn of "sope."

Feeling a strong premonition of trouble at home, I summoned horse and outfit and we made straight for the distant camp, reaching it at sundown. A great troop of women was squatting just beyond the confines of the kitchen, each guarding a conical basket heaped with maize, mandioc, peanuts, mandioc flour and *pupa*, the surprisingly white meal prepared by pounding the Indian corn of the country.

No one who has not catered for a following of from fifty to seventy ravenous individuals can measure the problem of victualing a *safari*. Sixty Shangaans can get away with a biweekly ration of a ton of meat and there is a well-authenticated case of two Mchopes who ate an entire reedbuck (say forty pounds of flesh apiece) at a single sitting. This capacity makes shooting for the larder a job of no mean proportions, but man cannot live by meat alone and it behooves a *safari* leader to vary the diet if he would keep his sick list within bounds.

In times of drought, the usual practice is to keep a set of porters busy carrying rice or corn from some trading store, but when the rains have been abundant, natives will bring in a great variety of food if they are handled rightly. Once let a grudge take root, and a land of plenty will suddenly become barren as a swept floor. This does not mean that the Kaffir must be pampered. His group psychology is extraordinary. To the Thonga, abuse is an art—a ritual. He even has an annual festival devoted entirely to vituperation. An ingrown admiration for invective is the result and there is positively no limit to what you may call him, provided you have the wit to raise a single laugh in the course of the encounter.

Incidentally, the inclination of the women does not count directly in this matter of provisioning. They do all the work of preparing and transporting the food; they sometimes bring it in on their own initiative, but they may not refuse to do so once their overlord has been propitiated. The ancient formula was for a chief to come out from his kraal to meet a stranger of equal or greater rank than himself, bringing presents in the shape of fowl, beer, a goat, or other produce—sometimes in

large quantities. If he was satisfied with the return gift, an order would go out to his people to keep the camp supplied, and such an order was invariably obeyed.

This procedure has degenerated to a mere formality among the Thongas under the friction of civilization, largely because there is a tendency among white men, ignorant of the customs of the country, to belittle or even ignore the importance of the chief. By treating him as a thing of no account, all his dignified ceremoniousness has been swept by the board, to give place to the white man's shibboleth of the almighty dollar. The African has adapted himself and now provisioning has become to a great extent a matter of barter, pure and simple.

Our household affairs were complicated by the factor of exchange. The prices for labor are fixed by law in Portuguese money, and the prices for produce by custom. Ten years ago the Portuguese escudo was at par with the American dollar, cent for cent; but Cass and I had bought our Portuguese paper at ten to one. An inkling of the significance of this condition was just beginning to percolate to the interior, and we found ourselves between two fires. We must not spoil the market for people

who were forced to live and trade in the country; on the other hand, we felt like robbers when we paid a cent a dozen for eggs and two cents for a chicken. We salved our consciences by giving liberal presents on all sorts of excuses.

"A cent for your eggs and two more for your bright eyes, mother of six generations."

"Two cents for the chicken and four more because your baby is fat. Who are its fathers, shameless one?"

It was the joke that sealed the bargain, and the more ribald the pleasantry, the better; for these matrons of the wilds are of an ultra sophistication. They like their humor with a heavy flavor, and what they say to one another and to the men under the guise of repartee would sear the printed page if translated word for word.

There was one among them, however, who was not blinded to the worthlessness of Portuguese paper money by coarse jests or the clatter of mirth. Moiassa was her name, and she stood out from the other women in looks, poise, and animation no less than in intelligence. All her movements had the smooth grace of a panther and she even gave an indefinable impression of style by the way she

wore the single cloth known as a macheka, or kapulani. Her ancestors had been captured in war by Magudogudo's forbears, consequently she belonged to him by inheritance in his capacity as chief of his tribe. She had never been a wife to him and her status was that of a chattel. As such she had been sold to an Asiatic trader, who in the course of time had gone home, leaving her and her children to return to the ownership and protection of Magudogudo. This was a mere form of speech. If ever there was a female endowed by God with faculties ample for her own protection it was Moiassa.

Her first appearance started exactly the same kind of trouble an expert sea lawyer injects into a placid crew, and paper money was her text. Before she had had more than just time enough to show her mettle, however, Jack had come forward and engaged her in mellifluous conversation. He had had so many wives that he was actually hazy as to which one had borne him Mohamet, Cass's servant, and the experience he had gained in the handling of women was astonishing both in volume and in utility.

Before we knew what was happening he had engaged Moiassa as official washerwoman to

ourselves, not through offers of the despised currency, but by assuring her that we had summarily dismissed every woman from the *safari* at Panda and she would be the Only One. From that moment she became our valiant ally, but she might better have been called the entering wedge, the thorn in the side and the spirit of Lilith, rolled into one. Nevertheless, such was her vivacity, intelligence, cleanliness, wit, and good-humor that she was almost worth the price. The sinister gleam of aloof amusement in her eyes which greeted me on my arrival from the Greek's kraal was enough to establish as justified my premonition of trouble in camp. I looked in amazement at the great throng of women who had come laden with all the food they could carry, and quailed at the thought that it was our policy to buy whatever offered unless we were on the move.

As soon as I dismounted, Jack proceeded to marshal the female troop with voluble directions, making them line up in a semicircle and change their positions time and again by the fraction of an inch, as though exact symmetry were an essential. He then started in on a long speech in English, falling back on French, the language of his childhood in the Seychelles,

whenever he wished to be emphatic or impressive, and informed me that, having heard that the district into which we were going was destitute of food, he had sent out a call for a vast supply.

A heap of Portuguese banknotes having been produced, I began to pick and choose among the wealth of varied loads, whereupon he grew very excited and remonstrated with me as father to son, declared he was African and knew Africa, that he had been cook to the admiral of the French fleet which took Madagascar and to Sir Harry Johnson on the greatest of his treks, and that it would be a disgrace to him to see a big *safari* like ours faced by starvation. He leaned over and with a propitiating smile picked up the bundle of bills and started handing them out right and left in sheaves. I retrieved the money and ordered him off.

"You're drunk."

"Me drunk!" His wrinkled face assumed a look of pitying commiseration. "Me Mohammedan," he continued, with dignity. "Our religion not get drunk." And then began a monotone of slowly increasing crescendo which was to continue for hours. Patience came to its appointed end, and, remembering three

white men in my limited acquaintance who had lost fingers from their right hands, Prince Boris among them, from infection arising from hitting blacks with their bare fists, I picked up a riding switch, gave Jack a few sharp blows, and pushed him over. He fell headlong among his boxes and subsided. Edy, the final stand-by in any trouble, was ordered to prepare and serve dinner.

Presently Jack's interminable voice came to life again, no longer bibulously jovial, but burdened with extraordinary venom. "Me African," it stated. "You white man you know things; we Africans we know other things. I know wiscaft. Man asleep, I put wiscaft on him; he wake up wrong in his head all the same madness. Insult. This great insult. All the same you take me out and shoot me, *shoot* me, *shoot* me. I got another wiscaft; I put him on and people wake up dead. I know business for me; I get you food. You go out, work all day, eat nothing; I stay by camp, get *good* food for you, *always* get food for you. This great insult for me."

Cass came in and was rather dazed by the condition of turmoil which greeted him. We dined, and throughout the meal Jack kept on and on, and the further he went with his

threats of witchcraft the angrier I got. I walked up and down for half an hour, clenching and unclenching my fists and reminding myself that he was drunk, but finally I was on the verge of picking up a club and beating him into the respect for the white man which he seemed to have entirely abandoned, when a single phrase disclosed the fact that his entire string of remarks was addressed not to me, against whom it developed he held no grudge whatsoever for his switching, but against Edy!

"This Edy no good for him," declared Jack. "He sleep to-night, he wake up wrong in his head to-morrow. This great insult for me." And then came the elucidating wail, "*You take my kitchen!*"

There spoke your true cook, bred in the bone, whatever his race, color, or generation. It was true we had had an excellent dinner, beginning with such a soup as only the masterly hand of Jack himself could have prepared and ending with honey and golden rice cakes which bore his unmistakable sign manual. We learned then and subsequently that if he got drunk, which he frequently did, it was only after preparing an especially fine line of courses and tucking them away ready for

almost instant service. Incidentally, he was not only all he said he had been, cook to this and that nabob of *safari* life, father of many children and husband of a hazy sequence of wives, but also an unending reservoir of polyglot lore and philosophy. When he was assured that he would be handed back his kitchen on condition that he shut up at once and go to sleep, he complied after giving utterance to the following meaty dictum: "Tha's right. You tell me go sleep. You got two pounds; I got one pound. Always man got two pounds he make man got one pound do what he say. Tha's right."

Not the least entertaining and at times exasperating feature of African travel is the study of one's servants and their ways. Edy-bin-Feraje, who was making his seventh long trip with me, was extraordinarily silent, almost morose, and it was only after we had been out for weeks that he told us he had been "wrong in his head" and at the point of death from some mysterious illness when the cablegram arrived saying we required his services. The message seemed to have supplied the autosuggestion for a cure. On *safari* he was useless as a captain, but a tower of strength in himself, having a great aversion to calling on anyone for

assistance. I have known him in an emergency to set camp, make the beds, wash clothes, cook and serve dinner, clean the guns, stand by to close the mosquito net the last thing at night, and at a sudden lion alarm appear at the tent door almost instantly, carrying a light in one hand and a loaded rifle in the other.

As a gun bearer he was absolutely insensible to fear, and at least on one occasion saved me from certain disaster by his unalterable presence of mind; and yet he had his maddening faults. Nothing could make him boss the Kaffirs, hurry up the *safari*, or translate a sharp order. As an interpreter he would listen to Madada pour out ten minutes of circumstantial statement which by gestures and expression we could perceive to be drenched in local color and stirring narrative, and when we were keyed up to hear what it was all about, Edy would translate as follows: "He say, 'All right,'" and not another word could we get out of him. He was convinced that, should we follow Madada to the places so graphically described, we would get game, and that was all that mattered.

Not until eleven o'clock on the night of Jack's first great bust did the camp settle

down to quiet, which strain, added to twelve hours' hard work in the field, made turning out at dawn of the next morning unusually hard. It was moving day, and even while we washed our faces the entire establishment melted away as though by magic, so that when we sat down to breakfast the orderly table was like an oasis in a scene of trampled ruin and wreckage. Jack's painfully solemn and lugubrious face was true to all the traditions of the "morning after." To cheer him up we gave him a package of our precious tobacco and told him to share it with Edy.

"Tha's right," he grumbled. "Give an old dog a bone and tell him divide it with the cat!"

CHAPTER VII

SABLE ANTELOPE

Family resemblance to the roan.—A recollection.—Argentine, the mule.—Sweat makes hair curl.—More reminiscence.—Sable bull courts Argentine.—Why not Hawthorne?—An eighteen-mile chase.—Discourse on sable and eland bulls.—The sura camp and Cass.—Sura wine the prototype of Mexican pulque.—Sura camp and the Garden of Eden.—Elimination, not acquisition, the key to content.—African dignity.—Bad outlook for world-dry movement.—Cass's forenoon.—Cass's afternoon.—Suspense and the climactic shot.

OF all relationships between African species there is none more remarkable than that which links the sable and roan antelopes. Upon visualizing these gorgeous beasts one is faced by a living paradox—the fact that divergence can be slight and absolute at the same time. The roan is in coloring what his name implies, gray with a tinge of reddish dun, and his face is marked by two eye patches and a

muzzle of white, the latter cut only by the inverted crescent of glistening black cartilage connecting the nostrils. His horns are short, thick, and stunted, with a slight backward curve.

The sable, on the other hand, is of so dark a brown as to appear black in the open. His white eye patches extend unbrokenly to his lip and back again to the juncture of throat and neck. He is narrower between the eyes than his heavier cousin, and carries a mighty curving sweep of deeply corrugated horns whose smooth, sharp tips hang directly above his shoulders. In spite of these marked differences, the two are so alike that you never see the one without immediately recalling the other.

Of the two species the roan is by far the shyer, but can be found among the foothills of the Lebombos in large numbers, protected not so much by the game laws as by the superstition of the natives which has elevated him to the rank of *Shikwembu*, or "ancestor god," and made his young immune from being hunted down by means of packs of Kaffir dogs. No such taboo has aided the sable antelope, yet he throngs upon the flats of almost every division of the Panda country, in the valleys

of the 'Nyassune, the 'Nhamquerengue, the 'Nhampala-pala and on the high levels about Gcokwane.

I have described elsewhere the thrilling experience of still-hunting roan across a water hole in a blaze of moonlight, and it seems peculiarly fitting in this tale of dissimilar similitudes that all of my many memories of sable should be drenched in sunlight. The scene of the first of these recollections was laid in the ideal stalking country back of Bazarutu Island. Imagine if you can vast prairies of waist-high yellowing grass dotted every few hundred paces, almost with the regularity of a chess board, with ant hills fifty yards in circumference, thirty feet high, and each crowned by a towering column of trees. At just the right angle one could get a vista of a quarter of a mile, yet a few steps to right or left would find cover.

I was riding a jet-black, arched-necked government mule, fourteen hands at the shoulder, packed with all the bad will toward man of the son of Hagar and glorying in the misnomer of Argentine. To look at, she was one of the loveliest animals ever crossed by a leg, but to attempt to light a pipe while on her back was to invite the heavens to fall and the earth to

rise and meet them; even to spit cotton during the heat of the day meant the possibility of spitting blood or teeth five minutes later. Why burden a shooting trip with such a mount? Pride. My host had asked if I could ride, and a guileless heart had answered, "Yes." A few moments later a circle of faces had watched mine while one Kaffir with a twitch and two more hanging on her ears held Argentine for a fourth to saddle. It was a joke which the honor of my home state of New Mexico could not allow to pass.

The result was the losing of various trophies during the next few days, but, looking back across the lapse of ten years, there is no regret, for only one man in the world could be the first to ride Argentine, while almost anyone may be the last to shoot a hartebeest. A curious fact is here offered for the study of physicists: when we met, Argentine was a straight-haired mule, but after a forty-mile stretch, the first ten of which she galloped because she wanted to and the last thirty because I made her, she became as curly as a darky's poll and remains so to this day. What property of sweat makes hair curl? Why not reverse the operation and make millions? But never mind.

On the occasion under reminiscent review we were traveling slowly, intent on game, when we opened a long, clear vista of four hundred yards, at the end of which stood a lone sable bull. At the low whistle which announced his presence Argentine permitted me to dismount with nothing more than a violent quivering of her withers as a warning that any too-sudden movement on my part would send her up in the air. We were directly between two of the towering ant hills and had crouched below the level of the grass preparatory to making for one of them when the quarry looked up from his feeding and saw the mule. For a moment we thought it must be all up as far as that particular bull was concerned, but presently, to our amazement, he began to trot straight toward us. Realization dawned slowly that it was nothing more nor less than a clear case of love at first sight. The sable was courting Argentine.

He did not come forward with a rush, but by short little runs between which he would stop and pretend to feed. He trotted closer and closer, and with each advance my blood began to pound more loudly, while my knees and calves ached with an accumulation of pain which was rapidly becoming unbearable.

In the hurry of crouching for cover I had sat on my heels preparatory to traveling to right or left on hands and knees. The immediate discovery of the mule by the sable had had the effect of freezing every one of us in whatever pose he happened to be, for the grass was but a partial screen. Try sitting on your heels for ten minutes or even five; if you can do it without months of practice, look out for dark blood in your veins.

Absolute immobility is one of the prime factors in the successful pursuit of big game, which seldom runs at seeing a man, but always at seeing the man or something about him move. Many a hunter has lost a fine chance by thinking that the crooking of a little finger did not constitute movement, or that he could raise the muzzle of his gun if he did it a thousandth of an inch at a time. Having learned this lesson in a hard school, I knew the importance of holding to a petrified stillness until the buck should approach within the limits of a sure dead line, but the ache in my legs would not be denied. It drove me to measuring distance from the wrong end; instead of saying to myself, "Wait till you can see the whites of his eyes," I breathed, exultantly: "He has come a hundred yards as straight as a die—

two hundred—two hundred and fifty!" At about a hundred and eighty paces he looked as big as a house. I rose in haste; he stared in astonishment; I fired; he fled.

All this reminiscence is strictly to the point and intimately concerned with the day on which Madada and Maoia as trackers, Rungo, the horse boy, Five as interpreter, a local guide, and myself mounted on Hawthorne, started out at sunup to seek meat for the camp, but with specific intent to get a pala-pala, which is the native name for sable. We struck back from camp and away from water, traveling for two solid, endless hours through the weariness of the apparently interminable temba forest. Nothing broke its monotony save the high back of a baboon, showing grotesquely black at the far end of a tunnel of foliage; but at last the trees began to thin and presently frazzled into an irregular fringe which thrust its points out upon plains stubbled with milala palms and broken only here and there by sparse patches of wood.

This was sable country and, remembering my experience with Argentine as well as the assertions of many authorities, I explained to Madada, through Five, that horses were capital decoys for pala-pala, and that, far from

hiding Hawthorne, it would pay to use him as bait. Madada nodded his head many times, indicating that he was well aware of the phenomenon. Scarcely twenty minutes of silence had ensued when he sounded the low bird-imitation whistle which means game in sight. The action of slipping from the saddle had become quite automatic and an instant later we were all crouched low, each of us having caught a glimpse of four sable bulls mooning by day under a thorn tree, the wind being for us. They turned, they took one look at Hawthorne's milk-white bulk, and—ran. They ran for eighteen miles. That much we learned by plugging after them doggedly for six mortal hours; how much farther their fright carried them is a matter for individual speculation.

At two o'clock a halt was called. Since six in the morning we had traveled uninterruptedly at Madada's favorite spooring pace of three miles to the hour. We had covered twenty-four miles, but mercifully not in a direct line from camp, as the fleeing pala-pala had carried us along a backward tangent. While I munched the regulation white man's lunch ration of a bar of chocolate and four soda crackers, Madada discoursed on the peculiarities of eland and sable bulls.

Both of these giant antelopes form interesting studies. Each shows marked Turkish proclivities in the matter of wives and in the short heyday of his maturity is generally found at the head of a harem numbering from eighteen to thirty houris. The gentle eland often permits male understudies to travel with the drove, but I have never known of two mature sables sharing the honors of a single establishment, however large, though the obstacles to observation, owing to similarity of the sexes, are so great that it would be rash to give this opinion as an undisputed fact.

As families, both species are exceptionally vulnerable to a persistent sportsman because they will not travel far without halting, even after being shot at; especially the heavy eland, which can be walked down time and again in a single day. But the same truth does not apply to lone bulls, and it was the memory of two terrific stern chases in my company of eland rogues that made Madada link them with pala-pala recluses. The word is used in its widest acceptance, because, of all polygamous animals, the sable is in my experience the one which earliest sounds the shallows of plural connubial bliss and frequently retires of his own accord while still in the full vigor

of his strength, to stand majestic by the hour beneath some lonely tree, reading the single writing, "*Ku-ha-va*" ("That's all there is; there is no more"), on the wall of philosophic contemplation. Catch him in this occupation and he falls an easy prey; but if he be startled before the shot, he will run to infinity.

By calculation our base was four hours away, and after only thirty minutes' rest we started on the homeward trek, but had gone something less than a mile when we came upon the trunk of a milala palm chopped to a cone, fitted with a spout, capped with a woven helmet, and dripping its watery sap into a *sala* gourd. Madada's eagle eye flew hither and thither and presently picked up a trail so faint that to me it was totally invisible. Threading the vast sea of stunted palms, we followed it until we came to an exceptionally complete native camp.

As has been remarked in a previous chapter, the construction of an African kraal is the most ritualistic and involved enterprise known to the art of home building, and only one acquainted with its intricacies could appreciate to the full the sheer masculinity of this establishment which we found miles and miles from any settled habitation. It had a circular

stockade which was constructed not as a spiritual symbol, but frankly, as a preventive against the raids of lion and hyena. Within its circumference, clustered under a single large shade tree, were three grass huts, each furnished with as many bunks and a fireplace surrounded by half a dozen large barbels spitted on sticks and slowly roasting. Dogs, bows and arrows, pots and gourds hung about the place in that orderly disorder so dear to the heart of man in the open.

This unhomelike yet most popular spot was nothing less than a wilderness halfway house, and let those who know the why and wherefore of the homing instinct of the carrier pigeon explain how it happened that myself and my following found Cass and his entire retinue sitting in the shade of its palisade with that beatific expression on their faces which precedes an imminent drink.

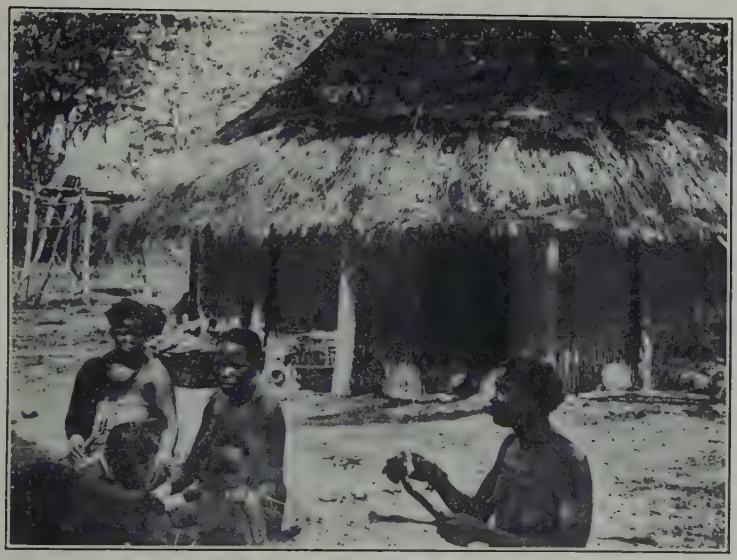
The pub was the communal property of a gentle-mannered, beautifully proportioned native and his five adolescent sons and nephews. Their title to the three million hogsheads of sura wine in embryo which surrounded them was on all fours with the right of a fish to swim. These six individuals had nothing to do from morn to sun-drenched eve save col-

lect nectar from a few hundred cupping gourds and sell or drink it before its pleasant, faintly alcoholic acidity turned downright sour. Every day one of the succession of the man's wives brought a supply of the common food of mortals from twenty miles away and promptly returned to prepare more. Save for a mere gee-string about their loins the sextet was naked, their limbs, their features, and their smoothly flowing indolence giving an intranscribable impression of content not as a mood, but as a condition. They seemed immersed in happiness as an element—natural as air, water, or warmth—exiled to that lonely place and time from the ravaged slopes of Ararat.

Some decades ago, in a day when unemployment was rife in the land; city, town, and country jails overcrowded and newspapers full of the advocation of concentration camps for vagrants, I was bitten by the hobo bug and on my way up the Hudson came upon a lovely indentation amid overhanging trees where was placed a great drinking butt for horses, fed through a moss-grown trough with a steady gush of clear spring water. Beside it sat a tramp of saturnine visage who watched my approach with that look in his eyes which indicates something to say to any listener.

"Son," he exploded, "all this gab about the high cost of the unemployed makes me tired. Us hobos would come together of ourselves and relieve the strain on every doss between Philly and Frisco if the gover'ment would only run beer in this here."

He kicked the tub, spat in its lucid water, and walked away. He had been waiting there, perhaps for an hour, to give voice to this great idea. To my inexperience it had all the earmarks of a profoundly economic thought, and only after thirty years, here in Africa, surrounded by an uninhabited and almost illimitable sea of potent milala palms, was I to realize that the scheme would not have worked. Here was the free beer in vast quantities and no tramps; which only goes to show that, after all, civilized man is in himself a complex, seeking by acquisition to reach a bourne which is open only to those who know elimination as the sovereign road to content. Even the savages about me had had to go through a basic process of divestiture, getting rid of homes, wives, and other accumulations, before they could be received for a space into the element of freedom. Released from all care, they taught a double lesson: that man is not measured for happiness by what he can get,



but by what he can do without, and that there are greater things in this life than happiness.

While the seeds of this philosophic deduction were being sown, one of the Elysian youths had run to a cache, artfully hidden in the bush, and fetched an enormous gourd, fully the size of a five-gallon jug. The frond of a palm was quickly twisted into a funnel, filled with a nest of fragrant grass to act as a sieve, its small end tucked into the necks of our emptied canteens, and the great gourd tipped to fill them with cool sura wine. We took two long, tingling drinks and handed our host the equivalent of five cents. He glanced at the note, folded it slowly, and murmured a speech to the interpreter.

Of all the qualities which endear the African to those who know him best, that which is most frequently in evidence is his innate dignity. He is deliberate in his salutations, calm in the delivery of important news, slow to declare his wants, and vociferous only under the sting of injustice or after he has worked himself into a rage by the graduated steps of an accepted formula. His extraordinary self-possession is not a pose; it is his armor, so much so that if in the most ominous situation

you once make him laugh he is as helpless as though you had tickled him to death. Ordinarily, what a native says when you give him money can be ignored, but in this case there was just that shade of difference in intonation which should put one on guard.

"What did he say?"

"He said," replied Five, "that since you are white men he accepts the money, but a native would have had to pay him twice as much."

"What! He thinks five cents too little for two drinks?"

Five spoke to the publican, the two of them stared thoughtfully at the brimming five-gallon gourd, and finally remarked that in their opinion it held more than two drinks.

"You mean ten cents for the whole jug?"

"Of course," said Five, with a measuring glance around at our combined following of eleven parched retainers, not one of whom had betrayed the slightest impatience to quench his thirst, and whom, as a consequence, we had completely forgotten. We joyfully handed over twice the amount demanded, to the complete satisfaction of the publican, and when the misunderstanding was explained it became the joke of that and many days to follow.

Sura wine has many points in common with

the pulque of the Mexicans; both are the undiluted sap of a plant, both must be drunk within a few hours of extraction, and both, if taken in large quantities at the crucial point just before spoiling, have a suspended-action kick that rivals the powers of the hind foot of a Missouri mule. Judging by the permanent effects, however, the maguey is an unqualified curse to man, while the milala palm is, with rare exceptions, a blessing.

Anyone who visits the feudal maguey plantations is immediately struck by the sodden appearance and besotted demeanor of the entire peon element of the neighborhood, but during many years in Africa I remember only three sura drunks. The palm wine is undoubtedly the milder, and when fresh is nothing more than a delightful and invigorating beverage. The proof that it lacks the ingredients for the basis of a vice lies in the fact that the supply is absolutely free (subject to allotment of a few thousand acres by the tribal chief) and unlimited, yet seldom abused. It is doubtful whether at any time of the year more than one per cent of the population is engaged in tapping the milala palm.

This does not mean that the native African is in better case than the peon, however, when

it comes to the question of alcohol as a destructive agent. Throughout the trip our curiosity was constantly aroused by coming upon crude mechanical contrivances hidden in the most out-of-the-way places, and upon investigation we found that while the Kaffir is indescribably stupid and indolent in inventions of legitimate utility, he is one of the most ingenious moonshiners in the world and has solved for himself all the principles of fermentation and distillation.

Among the Ba-Thonga alone there are three tremendous annual drunks marked by the location and timing of the fruit seasons of the nkanye, the cashew, and the wild pineapple, with honorable mention for the mphimbi, which bears a startlingly scarlet fruit known as the bastard apricot. In addition to these seasonal orgies, the natives have always with them, in addition to sura, a great variety of Kaffir beers brewed from Indian corn, millet, and sorghum. Lastly, they produce an assortment of illicitly distilled rums which are the final word in bottled lightning.

In its effort to stamp out distilled liquors as opposed to fermented beverages the Provincial government exercises a surprisingly effective embargo on every species of metal tubing,

but even so, it is often outwitted by the savage mind, aroused to super efforts by the desire for proscribed hard liquor. One may instance the tremendous importation of umbrellas with nickel-plated handles by "boys" returning from the Rand mines which lasted until some wide-awake administrator noticed that the umbrellas were never raised in time of rain, never given as love tokens, but disappeared literally into the soil to devote their hollow stems toward inducing an increase in unlawful humidity.

As a result of these universal activities, drunkenness may be classed as the greatest single factor in the Kaffir's arrested development, but in surroundings where every individual has at his fingers' ends and at his back door twenty-six methods and ingredients for the unlimited production of hooch, the outlook for the world-dry movement is either very dark or very bright, according to which side of the fence is your stance.

In spite of a busy morning, Cass had a tale of woe to tell. To give an example of how much can be said in a few words when one is not writing professionally, I quote from his journal the account of this forenoon.

Friday, September 24. Left 6.30. Went east from camp. Saw wildebeest and they ran. Shot two for meat at two hundred yards. Later saw band of sable. Shot at one Magudogudo said was bull at one hundred and sixty yards. Boys said had missed but we put up the sable from grass about one hundred and fifty yards further on and dropped it. A *female*. Later in a. m. shot at one which all boys said bull, as it had largest horns. Made good shot. *Female* with long horns. Saw lone wildebeest with band of sable. Saw bunch of wildebeest. Met G. at sura camp.

The tragedy buried in these few lines could be unearthed only by a brother sportsman. Imagine that you have gone ten thousand miles for a six weeks' shoot, that you have allotted four precious days to the securing of a sable bull, that three of these days have drawn blanks, and that on the fourth you come upon a band of sable which you know positively is headed by the object of your heart's desire. With your blood pounding in your veins, you still have the patience and the nerve to interpret the gestures of your trackers, pick out the beast they indicate, draw a careful bead, go out for the meat and get it. You've got him; you're in heaven; it's a *cow;* you're in hell. Two hours later you go through the very same emotional gyration and your head begins to ache a bit. In spite of the brilliant day, the whole trip seems to take on a deep black border.

In every such case, if one could penetrate the mind of the victim, it would be found to be busily planning ways and means for a return to Africa at some future date in order to nail a sable bull, but Cass was not destined to wait so long for his next chance. Greatly refreshed, we had left the sura camp and traveled half the long way home, when one of our large following came to a sudden stop. Immediately every one else did likewise and turned questioning glances on the "boy" who had been the first to halt. We all understood his action perfectly; it meant that he had caught a glimpse of something which aroused his curiosity, but had not been clearly enough seen to justify the low whistle which is sounded only when the discoverer is sure of his grounds and wishes to indicate game as actually in sight.

The "boy," who was one of Magudogudo's henchmen, was staring fixedly at a mass of dense cover, and, on being questioned, murmured vaguely that he had caught a flicker of something far beyond it. As he knew best what direction to take to avoid possible exposure, he was sent forward to reconnoiter, disappeared into the bush, presently returned into view, and beckoned excitedly. We had been

holding our positions as though carved in stone, but now moved forward in a body to the lee of the dense wood. The scout ran out to meet us and announced a large herd of pala-pala feeding in the open well the other side of the patch of forest.

Cass and I dismounted and with the chief trackers, Magudogudo and Madada; Quambe, the camera carrier, and Five, as interpreter, rapidly threaded the bush until only a screen of foliage divided us from the great plain beyond. There we saw a drove of twenty-two sable feeding slowly in our general direction. They were fully four hundred yards away; the wind was right, but there was no cover between us and the game and, worst of all, the light was on its last legs. Under an izonzo we found a clean, sandy knoll adequately protected by a natural blind and there we sat down, surrounded by all the paraphernalia of big-game shooting and our retinue of advisers.

The sable were traveling slowly in a characteristic formation; half a dozen members of the band were in widely detached positions in the van, at the sides and in the rear of the main drove, which formed an almost compact mass in the center. Owing to their isolation, these skirmishers bulked very large, and one

could forgive the well-meant ardor with which Quambe and Five picked one after another of them for the bull. At each of their whispered guesses Magudogudo shrugged his shoulders, his face holding to an expression which seemed to say that never again would he name a male sable short of counting the rings on his horns, and just as often Madada shook his head in violent denial. He was too busy to speak. Seated on his heels, with his bared head strategically placed between two fronds of a scrub palm, his eyes flickered incessantly across the backs of the more congested mass of antelopes and finally stopped with such suddenness as to give the illusion of an audible click.

From that instant they never wavered from the individual upon which they had settled. Even with field glasses Cass and I could find no distinguishing variation in the herd of noble beasts, each armed with a mighty pair of saber-like horns; but Madada, making all due allowance for changing lights and shadows, had found one coat that consistently shone a shade darker than any of the others and had promptly picked it for the bull's. Even with Five interpreting, it took us some time to identify the king of the herd, and when we

did it was only to realize that a cow covered him in such a way that only his head and neck were visible. Cass, who had won the toss for the shot, fastened his binoculars on the bull and followed him step by step through minutes which began to seem like hours.

Relieved of all responsibility, my attention was free to revel in the details of a superb *mise en scène* and to weigh the dramatic factors of an extraordinary situation. The plain was bathed in the last clear blaze of the sun's full power. Save for the bit of cover that each had chosen, scarcely a blade of grass intervened between us and the full view of the grazing herd. Except for the agonizingly deliberate mincing steps of the drove of sable, nothing animate stirred; but to all of us it seemed that the sun fell by jerks toward the horizon, like the loose hands of an aged clock. Sitting there in pulsating immobility, we were nevertheless partakers in a three-cornered race between the slow pace of the game, the rapidly failing light, and the power of the rifle. Everything depended on a prompt conjunction of three circumstances—distance, light, and the chance for a shot.

Cass had in his lap his favorite rifle, the double-barreled .350 Rigby Magnum. At my

murmured warning that the shooting light was fast waning he made a signal with one hand and Magudogudo immediately slipped the long telescope sight from its case. It took but an instant to adjust and lock it home, and scarcely was the operation completed when Madada emitted a low explosive grunt. Simultaneously the long tension to which Cass had been subjected suddenly crystallized in response to a change in the relative position of the cow which had been in the way. Dropping his field glasses, he seized his rifle, searched out the bull in the limited field of the telescope, picked him up, and then steadied himself for the long shot.

The cow had only half turned toward us, revealing little more than the shoulder of the lord and master she had been unconsciously protecting. We were terrified lest at her first move with the herd she should resume her former position, consequently it seemed an eternity before the sharp crack of the cordite powder came to relieve the aching suspension of all our faculties. Immediately the herd of sable broke in every direction as though a bomb had exploded in its midst, gathered again into a compact, thundering mass, and swept swiftly away toward the horizon. But

over two hundred paces away, black, shining and final as the period at the end of a long paragraph, lay the great bull, felled in his tracks by the single bullet.

CHAPTER VIII

INYALA

Of a noble family, cousin to the bushbuck and the bongo.—Conflicting estimates, and why.—Habitat and habits.—As plentiful to-day as when first discovered.—Reminiscence of three tragic days.—The break to the right.—A chance for a long shot.—The splendor of the beast.—Nothing to eat.—The doe, the fawn, and then the bull.—The barn-door shot at one hundred and fifty yards.—Home by starlight.—The return with Cass, four years later.—Changed conditions.—Unseasonable rains.—Hard work and despair.—Losing a buck at ten paces.—Murder in the balance.—A ghastly story.

NONE of the fifty-odd varieties of major antelope in Africa has been so variously appraised as the inyala, a member of the truly noble family that counts as the least of its line the little bushbuck (credited with having killed more hunters than any other horned animal excepting the Cape buffalo) and which

also includes the splendid bongo. One or two authorities put down the inyala as the easiest of all game to find and kill; others declare it to be among the most difficult. When Lord Selborne was Governor-General of South Africa he devoted an expedition to the sole purpose of securing a single head, and his contemporary, Col. Freire d'Andrade, greatest of modern Portuguese colonial administrators, protected the handsome buck rigidly in the belief that its rarity was threatening extinction.

The reason for these conflicting estimates are not far to seek. Of all antelope, the inyala is supposed to be the most localized in its range and is known to exist in only four strictly circumscribed regions—three in that minor portion of the Province of Mozambique which lies south of parallel 22, and the fourth in Central Africa, north of the Zambesi. It has been my fortune during the last ten years to visit all three of its haunts situated in Portuguese territory, and it is safe to assert that no single one of them exceeds fifty miles in circumference, and that each is definitely cut off from the others by obstacles which the inyala as we know it to-day could never surmount. Like its royal cousin, the bongo, it is terrified of open spaces and seldom goes more

than a few yards from the dense, thorny bush which is its habitat.

So much for its rarity. Now here is the other side of the question. The restricted splotches of jungle which it frequents are so well-nigh impassable that the inyala seems to have acquired an exaggerated sense of immunity from danger; not only does it feel safe while inside the vast thickets, but when they are near by. Consequently, in the early morning and at evening it walks recklessly out, generally accompanied by a wife and only child, to browse in open glades and at the extreme edges of uncovered plains. Owing to strict protection up to 1915 and to its natural inaccessibility, the tribe has undoubtedly been on the increase, and now, taking into consideration the physical limitations of its breeding grounds, is astonishingly numerous, probably as plentiful as when it was first discovered. The result is that anyone who knows just where to go and has time and the patience to wait for opportunity is practically sure of a shot.

The year which saw the Maputo reserve thrown open to holders of first-class licenses embraced the last of my seven consecutive shooting seasons in Africa and inspired the

ambition to crown my collection of trophies with an inyala, easily the most coveted of all heads south of the Zambesi. Added duties arising from the war made an absence of any length out of the question and threatened to defeat the project altogether, but by great good fortune the final three days of the shooting season comprised a week-end, and after making unsuccessful efforts to secure a companion I started off accompanied only by Edy as gun bearer and Jim, the machinist, in a whale boat equipped with tiny twin engines of minimum horsepower, but which had chugged me with never a break-down through many a happy day.

In the haste of departure we took only what happened to be in the larder, the tail end of a ham, a couple of loaves of bread, an opened box of biscuit, half a dozen tins of sardines, and a few bottles of beer. Remembering at the last moment that the river up which we were going was nothing more than a salt arm of the sea through all its winding eighty miles, we added a demijohn of drinking water. A roll of blankets and a mosquito net formed the entire camping equipment, as the boat provided comfortable sleeping quarters and it was not my intention to move far from it if rumors

as to the prevalence of inyala near the banks of the Tembe proved to be well founded.

In spite of our hurry we missed the tide and for six solid hours of blazing sun had to buck the swirl of the outgoing water. The Tembe, like most of the navigable indentations of the Indian Ocean, offered few distractions to the voyager; curve to the right followed curve to the left with monotonous repetition between two unbroken walls of the "white" and useless mangrove. There were no sand pits and consequently no crocodiles, most welcome of all targets to a restless gun. Only white-throated fish eagles and an occasional snowy ibis punctuated the long prose of the dense verdure, and, knowing themselves to be immune, did not even deign to flap a wing at our passing. For comfort, however, there was the steady hum of the two little engines and the knowledge that no shoal or snag barred the deep channel to our destination. The main thing was to arrive in time to catch the light for at least an hour's shooting, and we did it.

We found Shibele at his kraal and, though he pretended to be no hunter, persuaded him to leave his charcoal burning and show us where the inyala walked. He led the way,

carrying a straight staff instead of the regulation assagai, and, as soon as we had reached broken country, pointed with it silently to this and that body of bush as being likely places for the game we were seeking. We had no time for spooring and advanced quickly from one cover to another.

Suddenly, fitting in with the rather breathless proceedings of the day, there came a plunging rush and the dark blur of a splendid buck crossed the field of vision as he tore his way toward a near-by thicket. As luck would have it, he broke to the right. In common with many another sportsman, I generally get what breaks to the left and shoot behind anything moving at thirty miles an hour to the right. This first brush with inyala proved no exception; the beast went clean away.

I turned toward the boat, not altogether discouraged; the game was there, and with the morning and afternoon of a whole shooting day still to the good, hope ran high. We got off in the first light of the dawn, but by nine o'clock we knew we had drawn a first blank. Three o'clock saw us away on a fresh start. We walked and walked and the sun was fast sinking toward that invisible horizon which suddenly saps its rays of shooting light

when Shibele stopped in his tracks. Before he could speak or make a movement with his staff my hand was on his shoulder.

We stood on the crest of a gently sloping, wide hillside dotted here and there with clumps of trees, and we had opened up the view just in time to see an inyala walk out of sight beyond one of these groves. Sure that he had not seen us, I ran, followed by Edy, at full speed toward the cover, but around its other side. As too often proves to be the case in such instances, the bush was much more extensive than it had appeared. When our anxious eyes finally picked up the buck again he was all of four hundred yards away and climbing the opposing slope of a little valley, not hurriedly, but with the steady, space-eating gait of one who returns home after a busy day.

Seldom has finer sight been seen. His lyre-like horns were held erect, their amber points lost amid the golden rays of the sun; his mane stood up like a crest; the thick fringe of long white hairs along the ridge of his back shone out in violent contrast to his dark body, and with each mincing step of the delicate hocks that looked as if they must snap under such a weight, he flicked the snowy, full bush of

his tail in a gesture of vigor—or was it of derision? Even as we watched, his magnificent though distant form melted from view, and as I started to follow again at a run Shibele called to me, pointed to the sinking sun, and explained that the bush in which the quarry had taken cover was well-nigh impenetrable and without end. So passed a chance for a long shot as has many another, because there are moments when the pounding hunter-heart simply cannot believe that the sun won't pause in the heavens for its individual benefit.

To return to the boat empty handed was bad enough, but to go to bed practically supperless was worse. Even so, it seemed a crime to up anchor and turn one's back on the very last day of the open season. Having secured a chicken and a few sweet potatoes and measured the potable water left in the demijohn, sailing orders were countermanded and the die cast for a last trial. The morning produced no sensation, but at four o'clock in the afternoon, just as we were about to penetrate the fringe of a deep wood, Edy sounded the low whistle of warning. He was walking last, but his sharp eyes had caught some infinitesimal glimmer of action—the flicker of an ear, the quiver of a taut leg shaking off a hippo fly,

or the twitching of a tail. The forest is still; within its immobility all movement, any movement, is a betrayal.

We sank to our knees and crawled forward until I found myself crouching in a tunnel-like oriel opening on a hidden sunny glade otherwise entirely shut in by matted thickets. At the further edge of the clearing, not a hundred yards away, browsed an inyala doe and her foal. They were of a pale buff color dotted symmetrically with spots of white, and both seemed absurdly small for close relationship with so magnificent a beast as the absent lord of the ménage until one remembered the astonishing slenderness of his legs and the tininess of his feet. Edy slithered noiselessly to my side. "*Le madoda*," he whispered, with held breath. "The male comes."

With the silence of a shadow the buck moved into the picture. Quite suddenly where there had been emptiness he stood and filled the eye with his brownish slate-blue bulk, fantastic shaggy trimmings, and aspiring horns. Everything about him—color, weight, shape, and bearing—was in violent contrast to the characteristics of his consort and their joint offspring. He offered a shamefully easy mark and, feeling the anticipatory surge of elation

which comes to one at the peak of accomplishment, very slowly I raised the gun, a brand-new .318, made to measure and equipped with all the latest gadgets, took aim, fired, and missed.

Every failure in life has its specific value, hard to estimate at the moment, but easy to size up in retrospect. As we went down with the tide late that night I was conscious of a profound sensation underlying despondency, a vague feeling that one could not abandon a long and happy chapter of existence to such a sorry ending. There was no moon, but a billion stars laid a silver ribbon along the central channel of the river, bordered in deepest black, as if the very waters had gone into sympathetic mourning with my mood. I lay stretched on my back on the roof of the cabin, hour upon hour, answering the stars one after another and subconsciously establishing the mental foundations for a return to Africa. Through the years which were to intervene the memory of the three brimming yet empty-handed days which culminated in that night of meditation never slacked its pull, and when at last the time of fulfillment came I wrote at the head of my list, "Inyala."

On the scratch four-day trip which Cass and

I sandwiched between our first arrival at and departure from Delagôa Bay, we went up the Tembe, as has been previously narrated, and landed at the selfsame spot of my previous ventures, but found that the years had dealt harshly with Shibele. Financially he was prosperous, but physically he could no longer stand the strain of a day's march. After greeting Edy with something approaching affection, he sent out messengers to fetch two youths whom he recommended as experienced hunters, and the following morning we moved to a rainfall water hole ten miles inland, in the very midst of the bush and far from any kraal.

Conditions had changed with a vengeance. Having been shot at during several seasons, the inyala no longer walked boldly down one side and up the other of a sparsely wooded valley. They seemed to have retired indefinitely into the almost impenetrable thickets which abounded in the district, and it was only by taking up their early-morning spoors and following them patiently hour after hour that we succeeded in getting near enough even to catch a fleeting glimpse of a crashing form as the game broke from only a few yards away.

There are limits to snap-shooting, however quick the guns, and I have yet to meet a man

who has succeeded in dropping an inyala while actually in the bush. Rarely can one see twenty paces ahead in the jungle which they frequent, and it is so thorny and interlaced that to advance absolutely noiselessly even on the hot trail of an odorously fresh spoor is a physical impossibility. It is such vain efforts as those we were making in our impatience that are responsible for a widespread conviction that inyala are killed only by a fluke.

To add to the general feeling of defeat and discomfort, the dawn of the last day at our disposal broke to a drizzle which gradually thickened into a steady rain, such an occurrence as under pre-war conditions had not been known in September during the memory of the oldest inhabitant. In seven years' shooting all over the Province, recollection failed to recall a single rainy day before the end of October, and, anxious to study the effect of the abnormal downpour as an aid to surprising the game in its lair, we slathered our guns with oil, bribed boys and hunters out into the wet, and started off in different directions. For reasons connected with the striking of camp, Edy was left behind and as a result my tracker was intrusted with the second gun, a super-

fluity in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred when hunting nondangerous animals, but none the less commonly classed as a necessity.

There may be countries where shooting in the rain is a pleasure, but Africa is not one of them. In the first place, the wet does not invigorate; it merely depresses the spirit and all but paralyzes the body. The Kaffirs and their women, huddled in huts amid shivering dogs and squatting chickens, go into a sort of hibernation, scarcely moving and seldom speaking. The little goatherds creep under the scanty shelter of a palm frond and frankly weep by the hour. All natural denizens of the wilderness seem to sink into the sodden ground and utterly disappear. Spoors are blotted out, or at the best rendered unreadable except when they are cut fresh and deep by game forced against its will to make a rush before the purely fortuitous approach of the hunter. In the face of these drawbacks there were reasons for thinking that the conditions would aid the shy inyala less than any of the more scattered buck as there was less speculation as to just where to go to stir him up and, once he was flushed, the cover was certain to be so dense that the spoor would hold for a long time however heavy the rain.

My party consisted only of guide, tracker, and myself. Without bothering with the scattered clumps of cover here and there, we made straight for the great inyala bush, plunged into it and advanced as swiftly as the growth would allow. After less than an hour's walking we heard what we were listening for, the sound of a startled rush and crash which died quite suddenly as though smothered by the wet blanket of the dripping forest. We moved in the direction from which it had come and picked up the deeply indented spoor of a buck accompanied by the very usual combination of wife and child. A halt was called to give emphasis to the command that from there on we were to proceed with every possible caution and after taking the wind and finding it virtually stationary we began to crawl along the trail, often on our hands and knees for yards at a time.

Dressed in the irreducible minimum of khaki shirt, breeches, socks, and boots, one would think it could not matter to me how much it rained, but such was not the case; the clothing laid cold, clammy hands on my every movement and when, owing to an especially thick stretch of cover it at last grew tepid to the touch, the negotiation of some tangle in

the path would loose an avalanche of heavy drops down the back of my neck to percolate swiftly into my squashing shoes.

Only the prevalence of every variety of thorn prevented me from stripping and going naked. In recompense we were constantly tantalized by nearer approach to the game than we had attained on any other day, but came upon it in such dense bush that a shot was impossible. The trouble was that each of the three buck which we followed that day perforce knew that we were on his trail and took precautions accordingly. Nevertheless, every clearing, every short vista, made hope spring up anew to the thought that perhaps in some such spot the chances of hunter and hunted might yet strike a fair balance.

For eight hours we worked without even a stop for lunch, sometimes swiftly and carelessly, but most of the time crawling cautiously in breathless anticipation of the chance that never came. At three o'clock, with miles of hard going between us and the open, we called it a day and started for camp. Tired by the weight of the .318, I handed it to the tracker and took instead the little 6.5 Mannlicher which he had been carrying since our start in the early morning. As we reached the

edge of the forest the rain stopped and a band of yellow light broke through the clouds just above the horizon. Even that small comfort was enough to cheer us and we set out along a path which skirted the bush at a pace that soon put warmth into clinging clothing and set the blood to tingling.

We had covered more than half the way home when the guide stopped in his tracks with a curious gasp not listed among the various warnings to look out for game. I followed the direction of his startled gaze and saw just beside the path and certainly not twenty paces away something which looked like a huge umbrella still glistening from use in a rainstorm. It was a deep slate blue in color, marked with thin transverse stripes of white, and in the instant which told me it was a bull inyala, feeding head down, his tail just free of the bush, delivered by the goddess of fortune as though bound hand and foot for slaughter, I threw off the safety catch of the little rifle which at that distance could pierce the big buck through and through, and raised it to my shoulder.

The long, uneven chase was over, bar pulling the trigger, when the tracker, convinced that only the .318 could kill so large a beast, broke every rule of his guild, seized my wrist

and dragged it away. With frantic gesture he offered me the heavier gun, oblivious of the fact that its sight was down and its action locked. During the silent and, on my part, furious struggle which could not have lasted more than a tenth of a second, the inyala doe sounded an alarm from the near-by thicket and the buck raised his gorgeous head, whirled, and plunged out of sight.

Rage has its limits as an emotion; there is a point beyond which it fuses into an unnatural calm ten times more dangerous. Realization came to me that there could be no middle road between keeping my mouth shut and shooting the tracker. The atrociousness of his bungling loomed enormously against the background of time, money, thousands of miles, and years of anticipation which had led up to the heart-breaking anticlimax. It seems absurd in cold print, but for an instant I actually weighed the inconveniences inseparable from flagrant murder, involving the abandonment of the still-impending hunting trip, against the pleasure of inflicting the supreme penalty. By the dazed look in his eyes I imagined I could see that the boy expected to die, and was more than half disappointed when I turned from him without a word and led the way to camp

at a pace which forced him and the guide into a shuffling trot. The wilds do strange things to the insides of men. That night I told Cass a ghastly story of the Pongola River, not fifty miles away.

In the days when Fitzgerald was living his great classic, *Jock of the Bushveldt*, a gang of bandits, Scotch, Irish, and half-breeds, lodged in the fastnesses of the Drakensberg and raided the passes to and from the Rand. Terrorizing the whole divide was their vocation and hunting in the low veldt their pastime. On a certain occasion their leader, with a single white companion, killed a hippo in the Pongola River, and a violent dispute arose as to which had drawn first blood. To settle the matter they agreed to shoot from a hundred paces at a half-crown set against the trunk of a great tree. The leader fired first, drilling the coin so that it remained in place, riveted to the tree. He walked forward to mark his hit, and his companion shot him through the back, remarking, in native dialect, "He got the half-crown; I get the hippo."

CHAPTER IX

INYALA (CONTINUED)

Madada discourses on the scenes of his boyhood.—A story in every spoor.—Folklore in the making.—The promise of inyala.—Maoia's country.—Cass gets his inyala.—A family row.—Women banished for the second time.—The late start.—A splendid bull.—Psycho-physical note.—Are inyala stupid or bold or shy? and the answer.

AFTER my sequence of disasters in connection with the pursuit of inyala, it is not surprising that the conviction should have grown on me that a hard and fast hoodoo was in the air against me as far as that particular species was concerned, and that it would be a waste of time to make any further effort toward breaking it; consequently, during the first four weeks in the Inhasune country I kept putting off heading toward Maoia's kraal which had been repeatedly described as an oasis of huts completely surrounded by inyala. This attitude did not prevent me, how-

ever, from bringing up the subject from time to time with Madada at the nightly *indabas* or during the less formal conversations of the lunch hour. On one such occasion the pressing needs of the Museum of Natural History were explained to him and he was asked if out of the abundance of inyala around his father's place he thought we would surely get at least a specimen. The question was enough to launch him on one of his longest and most graphic speeches.

"I understand," he began. "The Mulungo fears that he will kill no inyala. Listen. Beyond those hills lies Maoia, my country."

The smile of a man remembering the hidden places of the farm of his boyhood lit up his shining black face; he raised his two arms into his characteristic gesture of one who draws an arrow to the head, his demeanor turned grave, and with flashing eyes and snapping fingers he began to describe with the minuteness of a map drawn to scale every forest, bush, glade, and water hole of his father's broad domain. To a Kaffir every incident is a landmark. Wherever memory stumbled on a tragedy of the wilds, such as a battle between buck and lion, or a leopard kill, or the torn trail of the wild-dog hunting

pack, depiction became narrative and Madada would turn to his hearers and read again, but aloud, the detailed story of the telltale spoor. No fiction fiend follows the printed page more avidly than the natives of Africa read the dramas of struggle written in cabalistic signs on the sands, the loam, the leaves, the trees, the bushes, and in the grass which are their open book, and when it is such a master as Madada who speaks, young and old hang upon his words with the intentness of children listening to a fairy tale.

It is difficult for any city-bred person to comprehend the scope of an expert tracker's powers of deduction in combination with an avid, almost naïve, interest in any happening. To a native no movement or clash of live things is insignificant. Let him come upon any mark whatsoever on the ground and one can tell immediately by his bearing and the expression on his face whether the story he is reading deals with big or with little animals such, for instance, as the hare, the tortoise, or the small toad, all of which hold an especial place in his affection because they are the frequent subjects of folklore. But whether the battle has been to the strong or to the weak, whether the story deals with elephant or the

tiny Livingstone antelope, lion, or weazel, it is unspun with the same absorbing attention to detail.

Madada once pulled off in my presence an impromptu interpretation which deserves to go on record as a classic example. We were walking along a path when he came to a sudden stop before a dragging mark crossing it at right angles. To me it looked exactly like the scrape of foot or stick with which one bars a road to the following *safari*, but to Madada it was no such commonplace guide-post. For an instant he frowned in concentration while he caught the thread of the story; then he raised his head, sniffed the air, looked down again, and finally, as he began to read, his face went rapidly through a sequence of changing expressions, breaking at last into a broad grin. He glanced at me over his shoulder, and exclaimed with shining eyes, "Eh! Mpfundla!" ("The hare!")

The hare is the wily fox of African folklore and when he is outwitted even to the tragic extent of his own destruction, it appears as a great joke to the Kaffir. Without moving from the spot where he had struck the strange trail and guided by such slight clues as a tuft of hair, a faded bloodstain on a leaf, the mark

upon the ground, a faint odor of decaying flesh, and the presence in the distance of the towering stump of a dead tree, Madada deduced the following true story.

In a game-run off to the left a boy, not a man, had set a snare, a loop made from the bark of the izonzo, arranged on a trigger and depending from a flimsy bent sapling planted rather loosely in the ground. Into the noose had plumped a hare in such a manner that instead of hanging him outright it had caught him around the middle and held him dangling, squealing and struggling in the air. At the top of the dead tree an eagle had his nest. Attracted by the cries of Mpfundla in distress he had swooped down on the poor hare, struck his talons home and risen, only to be jerked violently back to earth. Then ensued a three-cornered rough-house between sapling, eagle, and hare. Bunny soon expired, and the sapling was finally torn up, but during the lively struggle a second noose had thrown itself around the eagle's wing, close to his body. He could no longer fly; the more he strove to escape, the tighter the dragging sapling drew the cord. Thus shackled with the ball and chain of a convicted murderer, he had made his laborious way across our path to the

foot of the dead tree, climbed the stump by the aid of his powerful talons, tumbled into his nest, and awaited a slow death. We would find the sapling dangling from the farther side of the tree. We did.

In his remarkable book on the *Life of a South African Tribe*, Henri A. Junod, in treating of the folklore of the Thongas, has a division which he entitles, "Tales founded on real facts," under which he classifies such widely established stories as "The Child That Was Carried Off by a Baboon" and "Those Who Only Laugh Once." Having in mind the peculiar regard in which the hare is held by the African as the subject of an endless number of tales in only a few of which is he outwitted, and considering the amazing unity and completeness of the story given above, one could almost venture the prediction that in the course of time it will become incorporated among the classic fables of the Ba-Thonga.

The point made by this long apparent digression from the pursuit of the inyala is that the native, especially if he be a trained hunter, marks localities by events rather than by stream, forest, or crag, and an event being something which will stand telling over and over again amid a people who are natural

lovers of endless repetition in song and tale and masters of its cumulative effect, every time the opening occurs, "the spot where the mulungo or the lion or the buck did this or that," the topographer becomes a story-teller pure and simple and bursts into vivid narrative.

As a consequence it can be imagined that Madada might have taken five years to describe a radius of as many miles amid the scenes of his boyhood had he not been arrested by a gesture toward the sun and the implied order to get back to work. Smiling dreamily, he concluded his oration with these words, "When we come to Maoia's country we will take no guide, no *hanshi*, no Rungo; we will go alone after inyala, you and I and the gun."

So it was to be. One evening, returning from thirty-six hours on end in the bush on the track of elephant, we found that Cass had moved his half of the camp to Maoia's, whither we followed on the next day. For a time the way led us along the sandy margin of a monotonous izonzo forest, having on our right the vast sweep of the reed-covered Nyamekelengue flats, but finally we bore off to the north and experienced almost at once a remarkable change of air, scenery, and flora. The trees, the grass, the broken rolling view,

and the gleam of open water, the meadows and the gentle hills, all struck a chord of homely recollection even in the breast of the stranger who saw them for the first time.

We had passed the far limit of the range of the great sea of temba or izonzo forest which billows over rise after rise of the Inhasune country, with never a single tree of any other variety to sound a welcome discord to its monotone of small-leafed, stingy shade draped with pendulous, pale-green Spanish moss.

Here were dales and vales, nooks and crannies, parklike pastoral reaches and a lake, incredibly blue, its banks sharp and firm. Far away along a single broad vista, domed trees and their shadows dotted the still mat of mellowed hay, lying like dark clouds against a drench of amber light. Quite near by, cupped between two wooded knolls, a sweep of fluffy, white-topped grass gave the illusion of a field of daisies back home. This was Maoia's country, and, topping a final hill, we saw the camp nestling beneath us in a blot of shade, beyond it a wide, shallow dip rising soon to the long low line of the famous inyala bush.

Soon after our arrival Cass came in. He had crawled through a series of inyala thickets all the previous afternoon; in the morning he

had got off a bit late and repeated the performance until five in the afternoon when he sat down in a likely glade and waited for half an hour, and then started, torn, tired, and discouraged, for home. As he followed the path along the edge of the bush he came suddenly upon two bull inyala feeding, heads down in the grass. He shot one of them through spine and shoulder, dropping it stone dead; the other stood and stared at him for several seconds before it whirled and rushed away. This had happened within a mile of camp, so near that we had heard the shot and known that it had been a hit.

Both dog tired, we turned in early that night after a very brief *indaba*, as the only program for the next day was that Madada and I should go out and do likewise, while Cass stayed in camp to superintend the careful skinning of his specimen. In spite of chatter and song and the still bright camp fires, we went promptly to sleep, only to be awakened three or four hours later by a persistent murmur of voices. Wondering who had the assurance to be making all that noise in camp after midnight, we looked out and saw Jack, the cook, and his love, Moiassa, sitting on the boxes of the near-by kitchen and engaged in

a long conversation as to ways and means toward conjugal bliss in Delagôa Bay.

Emboldened by their example, several other monotone duets had started. Furious at being robbed of our hard-earned rest, we bellowed for Magudogudo and Madada, and presently a terrific row got well under way in which every one with a voice and an opinion took part, however distant the speaker might be. The theme was woman. Owing to many added loads in the way of trophies, half a dozen women had been conscripted casually here and there for a day's march, and had just as casually stayed on.

Madada arrived, wild eyed and breathless, followed presently by Magudogudo, inwardly boiling, but low voiced and preserving his habitual control. His appearance in night garb was such that for a moment we actually forgot the hurly-burly and our troubles. From his slim shoulders to his ankles he was draped in a dark-blue cloth of the finest texture, which he held at the breast with straight-fingered hands; on his head was the dully gleaming crown of black wax. The next time you are in a cathedral at night, look at almost any stained-glass window, pick out the principal figure, and you will see what we saw.

After a brief consultation he moved before us like an avenging angel from camp fire to camp fire, speaking at each a single sharp phrase. The effect was startling. Remembering his lineage with the long-deposed power of Gungunyane, his native dignity at all times, and his docility when, in khaki shorts and a wide-brimmed campaigning hat perched on top of his *shidlodlo*, he uncomplainingly did our bidding day in and day out, one could not but be impressed with his sudden assumption of an authority which swept everything before it. It actually awed us and made us wonder as to whether, after all, there may not be such a thing as an essence of kingship.

But I was not to be placated by mere silence. For days I had been ranting to Cass against the presence of the women. Even when they were apparently quiescent I imagined I could feel their malign influence undermining with cynical tolerance the serious affairs of men and making our sex ridiculous with their air of watching the boys play.

On this point Cass was not in sympathy with me. He said he saw no difference between these camp hangers-on and the wives of the trackers and guides who, wherever we were, brought especially prepared food and

beer to their husbands and often were forced by distance to stay the night. But there was a difference—the same difference which divides the Tenderloin from Fifth Avenue, or Leicester Square from May Fair.

Consequently, I was in no mood to pass this occasion for a clean-up. We called out the women, seven of them, including Moiassa, and packed them off in a body to an empty hut in Maoia's kraal. As they started down the path, herded by the vociferating Madada, pandemonium broke loose again. From all the broad circle of fires, those men who for days had in reality been seething with envy began hurling their jibes. For a moment the women walked in smiling silence, heads down; then with one accord they drew erect, faced right about, and let fly a torrent of words which swept across the camp like an obliterating flood, leaving in its wake a sort of stunned, expiring silence. Amazed, we demanded of Five what they had said, and being that rare find, an interpreter who takes joy in calling a spade a spade, he translated such a string of well-nigh unbelievable epithets as would have made a mule whacker of the old school hide his face in two kinds of shame.

All this hullabaloo took place between one

and two in the morning, and played havoc with my plans for an early, propitious start after a refreshing night's rest. Laying the bad luck of it at the door of the pursuing hoodoo which seemed to dog all my efforts toward securing an inyala, I got up rather late in bitter mood, washed, ate, and called for Madada. It was seven o'clock; the first light of dawn which would have offered us the best chance of finding the game in the open had long since passed, and we could scarcely hope for anything but hard work, belly to ground in the thorn thickets through all the heat of the day. Seeing the mist still lying thinly in the hollow which divided us from the sea of bush, Cass advised us to hurry in the tone of one who deals out small comfort with the best of intentions.

Stripped of every incumbrance save water bottle and a single rifle, the two of us started out, Madada carrying the gun until we should reach the hunting grounds. He led the way across a patch of burnt grass, and struck into a path which meandered down through the stubble of a reaped cornfield. As he walked swiftly along, his bare heels twisted in with a jerk to the push of each strong stride.

Watching his small feet as I had done for

hour upon hour of many a day (a bad habit acquired through stepping where he stepped in passing over the crackling dry-leaf carpet of the temba forest) and wondering if ever the photographic image of the peculiar formation of his heels would fade from memory, I was suddenly aroused as one dragged out of a dream by the hair. Madada was thrusting the gun at me with both hands and over his shoulder I saw the careering form of a bull inyala making not for the bush, but cutting away from it across the open, tilled ground and looking for all the world like a fat man running to catch a train. I seized the rifle, snapped back the sight-protector, put up the hundred-yard leaf, threw off the safety lock, and was still in time to drop the buck at a hundred and ten paces.

"*Que! Le madoda mculo!*" grunted Madada, eyes, face, and teeth welded into one shining, beatific grin, which, being translated, means, "Oh, the great male!"

We gloated a little over the fallen beast, I because he had been so desired and was so fair to look upon, and Madada because he was so good to eat. While the carcass was yet warm and pliable we made the necessary measurements for mounting purposes, and even so were back in camp within forty min-

utes of having left it. Cass was still at breakfast, and paid no heed to our arrival. Not having noticed the single shot, although he must have heard it subconsciously, he thought we had merely returned to await the cool of the afternoon. I told him what had happened and we sauntered down to view the scene of battle.

Here is a note on the psycho-physical phenomena of shooting. We found that the spot from which the inyala had been killed was half surrounded by a clump of castor bushes eight feet high and that I had fired through an aperture in the fronds not over eighteen inches square; nevertheless, I had been totally unconscious at the time of any obstruction whatever between me and the running beast and during the survey made the discovery of the bushes with genuine astonishment.

When the buck first took alarm he had been standing at the very edge of a dense thicket which bordered on the cornfield. This point, the spot where he fell, and the stance from which the shot was fired formed an exact isosceles triangle of a hundred and ten paces to each leg. Why had he run into the open? Are inyala stupid, or bold, or shy? Are they hard to get or are they not? The last of these ques-

tions was put aloud, and, remembering the violent contrast between the grueling work we both had done and the ease and suddenness of final achievement, Cass replied, "God knows."

CHAPTER X

KUDU AND OTHER MATTERS

Beating for bushbuck.—The real thing in impenetrable jungle.—Bushbuck sighted.—Reminiscence of first African trophy.—Side trips.—Provisions running out, owing to overstay.—Living on the country.—Papaya and cashew trees both exotic.—Nyapulangwe lake.—No pierced ear, no pots.—A night under the stars and thoughts on the Thonga house.—The meeting at Chitzolo with Cass, Bostock, and Abrantes.—Kudu, the most lordly buck that steps.—His consort ungainly.—Excerpt from Cass's journal.—A theatrical sunset.

WE were loath to leave Maoia's country, possessed as it was of a beauty at once placid and breath-taking. Here were gentle hills cupping a lake of turquoise blue, and broad plains flowing around towering clumps of trees which arose with the abruptness of so many Rocks of Gibraltar to break the monotony of the prairie and draw the startled eye heavenward. Here strange grasses, weird

blooms, and new foliage gave a freshened appearance to the whole world even while fields of yellowing hay, waving across the flats to ripple against the darkness and mystery of the blotches of impenetrable jungle, appeared hauntingly familiar. The whole district, bathed in a golden light peculiar to itself, seemed to us enchanted.

Rather than tear ourselves away immediately, we decided to devote a day to beating thickets for leopard and bushbuck, and started out the next morning, accompanied by the entire *safari* as beaters. Personally I have never cared for drives nor had any luck with them and this expedition was to net us nothing more than a tiny Livingstone antelope and the conviction that there really is such a thing as impenetrable jungle. Our system was to take our stations on the lee of an isolated bit of forest and send the men around to come through it with the wind at their backs. Where the wood was too extensive for this plan, we would place ourselves within it midway and have the beaters work toward us.

On one occasion, growing impatient at their slowness and annoyed by outbursts of cries indicating that what game there was was breaking back through the line, I told Cass to

stay at his post while I went to show the beaters how to beat. Never was boast more rash or quicker regretted. What was holding the natives back was an undergrowth of brambles as tough as wire and barbed with needle-like thorns which held after they had pierced. I plowed so deeply into the mess that it took Madada and three men a quarter of an hour to get me out. Apologies to the beaters were in order. They were made and that particular bush was promptly abandoned.

At the last cover, drawn late in the afternoon, we routed a bushbuck and watched his bullet-rush for two hundred yards across the open from one bit of woods to another without being able to fire a single shot. The reason was that, true to the indomitable nature of the plucky little beast, he had broken back toward the noise of the beaters and was protected as long as he was in sight by stragglers of our party coming in behind him.

As far as I know, the bushbuck is the only antelope which will attack a man merely because he is in the way, and his erect horns, very sharp and yet stout, combined with his astonishing speed, make him a dreaded opponent. The first animal I ever bagged in Africa was a magnificent specimen of this

little terror with horns thirteen and three-fourths inches on the outside curve. I was so ignorant of the preciousness of the trophy that I failed to take the mask, but I still have the skull.

For some time before our conjunction at Maoia's kraal Cass and myself had been separating occasionally for sporadic side trips. Ordinarily we bunked and ate together, but we were fully equipped for independent action and whenever one of us felt like it he was free to pack his kit and go. We had only the one cook, but for such short excursions Edy, my personal servant, was an efficient understudy, especially when our prolonged stay reduced us to the simplicity of living on the country.

It will be remembered that we had expected to stay only four weeks in the Panda district and then make a dash back to Delagôa Bay and up the Maputa River for elephant, but already we had seen enough spoor and gathered sufficient information to realize that elephant were near by in much larger numbers than on my previous visit seven years before when the securing of a single bull had created such a sensation as to make me think of the event as a lucky fluke. Consequently it would have been foolish to waste precious days in travel.

We had brought with us provisions for five weeks in as many boxes, all identical in weight and contents, and each forming a single load of forty pounds. They were supposed to meet every culinary necessity with the exception of staples carried in bulk, such as potatoes, onions, rice, sugar, and salt. So correct had been our estimate that the assortment failed us in only two particulars and otherwise lasted out the thirty-five days almost to an ounce. The two misjudgments occurred in regard to prunes and orange marmalade, and men who ordinarily dislike sugar in all its forms are warned against a sudden reversion of their taste in this respect when on a lengthy and arduous *safari*. For some dietetic reason, one's system under such conditions is apt suddenly to demand an orgy of sweetmeats.

As the cook announced in rapid succession, "Finish potato; *ai-cona* rice; no tin vegetable; finish flour, milk, sugar," and the passing of a dozen more so-called necessities, we had to face the alternative of trekking out or living on the country while we awaited the return of couriers hastily despatched to the coast and railhead for such scratch provisions as could be had readily. Needless to say, we did not hesitate on the choice. Fortunately, we had

an abundance of tea, and it was amazing to find how easily every other essential lack was supplied—wild honey for sweetening, various preparations of manioc in place of bread and potatoes, native beans for the tinned variety; and young sweet-potato leaves as greens. Pawpaws had long since replaced prunes for breakfast.

It is worth recording that this fruit did not exist in the Panda country seven years ago, but to-day there is no kraal of any pretentions which is not graced with from one to a dozen of the marvelously prolific papayas carrying enormous burdens of the fruit which seems to ripen day by day throughout the year. Old Maoia told me that his memory also went back to before the introduction of the cashew trees which are now numbered by the hundred thousands. We never saw a native eat a paw-paw; they appear to let the fruit rot on the stalk, but the cashew nut has become a staple and its fruit an immeasurable wine cellar.

Upon leaving Maoia's a period of restlessness ensued marked by one- and two-night stops, sometimes in company and sometimes not, at 'Nyapulangwe, Polissa, Mcocane, Chipaleca, and Chitzolo. The reason was that we were getting selective. We both wanted a

specimen each of kudu, eland, lion, and elephant, and nothing else would do. We went to 'Nyapulangwe together and camped on the margin of the lovely lake. Most of the waters in this region are protected from sight by a vast border of reeds, but this lake, about ten miles in circumference, is an exception. The camp was placed in a beautiful setting, but unfortunately the surrounding country proved barren of fresh spoor of any kind and on the next day we made a forced march to an uncharted spot known as Magongwe.

It was far from any kraal, which meant that our carriers would have to get a two-day loan on the big pots they usually borrowed in which to do their cooking. Advised of this necessity I sent my horse boy, Rungo, accompanied by a single porter, to do the borrowing wherever it could be effected. When we were already encamped they appeared without the pots and it took me an hour to find out the true reason as to why they had failed. Five came to the rescue finally with the bald statement that the natives would not lend their utensils because Rungo's ears were not pierced.

This is an illuminating sidelight on the minuteness of the subdivisions of the Thonga nation which is composed of six tribes all

speaking the same language with slight colloquial variations. I looked around and perceived for the first time that with the exception of Rungo, every man we had taken on since Inyambane had his ears bored. The natives had spotted the difference at once and, their assumption being that a boy with unpierced ears was a stranger and might consequently take their pots to any distance, we got none and had to do without.

A night I spent alone at Chipaleca, without tent, blanket, or mosquito net, stands out in memory because of the many wakeful hours which I devoted to visualizing what I had learned, mostly from Junod's book, in regard to the formation of the regulation Thonga kraal or family village. I had spent the entire day on the spoor of a wounded animal, giving up only at dark when fully twenty miles from camp. Chief Chipaleca fed me with roasted cashew nuts, manioc, and hard-boiled eggs, and offered me the choice of his huts, but I preferred a mat laid in the open with nothing but the stars above me as being a location less likely to attract anopheles mosquitoes.

There is no operation which the Anglo-Saxon considers more intricate than the building of a new home, but the head of a Thonga

family would look upon our complications as mere child's play. In the first place, he has to move, whether he likes it or not, whenever his predecessor dies or the kraal happens to be struck by lightning. To the former case there are no exceptions, and only the actual digging up by the medicine man of the mysterious bird which is the essence of the offending thunderbolt permits continuance in a home that has been the mark of the anger of the gods. In addition to these contingencies, marriage and the foundation of a new family create, as with us, an obligation to build.

Let us assume that a headman has died. The crown of his hut must be removed, the roof crushed to earth and trampled, the entire village abandoned, but his successor has a year to think the matter over. Near the end of that time he goes out to choose a location. He breaks twigs from several trees, brings them home, lays them out, and calls in the medicine man, who proceeds to roll the bones of omen. As has been said, the reading of these bones is far more intricate than a game of chess and just as established as to rules. The bones decide upon which tree the new home is to center. The prospective proprietor then proceeds to pass an obligatory honeymoon of one

night with his first spouse (known as the great wife) under that tree, and must never again return to his former residence.

In building he has to look much more seriously into the future than does his American prototype. If he has three wives, he dreams of a dozen more and has to plan for them there and then. By both native law and the law of the conquering European, each wife is entitled to her own house and (incidentally) each house pays a hut tax to the government. The African's ambition is to possess a complete circle of love nests. As a matter of present-day fact, however, he seldom gets beyond four, but this far-reaching effect of the high cost of living does not discourage him nor excuse the skipping of a single step in the long ritual of home building. From the choosing of the tree to the spattering of the final charm against evil spirits on the circular fence which bounds the new kraal, every move and almost every motion has to be gone through in strict accordance with the Ethiopean Hoyle.

The actual building of the house, oddly enough, begins with the construction of the roof. The native architect digs a shallow, circular pit in which he arranges, points down,

about a hundred thin poles of even length in such a manner that, when he gets through, the sticks form a perfect inverted cone with its apex in the center of the hole. He binds them solidly in that position by tying them with strips of tough bark, interlacing them with long, thin branches and binding the lot with more tough bark until the whole structure is as solid as the old oaken bucket before acquiring its coat of moss.

The framework of the roof is now complete and one would think that the builder would measure its diameter with a string, put a peg in the ground at the site of the new residence, halve the string on the peg, and draw a perfect circle. That is what a white man would do, but the African skips all but the final step in the operation. He takes one look at the inverted roof, picks up a stick, and draws the perfect circle without bothering with strings and pegs and things of that sort.

On the line of this circle, five-foot posts are planted firmly and bound with three circlets of bent branches. The interstices are filled in with lighter sticks, and the round wall of the house, continuous except for a single narrow door, is ready for its hatlike roof. The builder and his friends now lay violent hands on the

great cone of a roof and with heaves and groans and pushing and lifting place it point up on the round wall. It settles unevenly with a grip that nothing short of a ninety-mile hurricane can break.

In the meantime other members of the master builder's family have been gathering a tough grass about two feet in length and tying tuft to tuft until they have a thick, narrow mat as long as the base of the roof is round. This strip is sewed firmly to the lower circumference of the cone and then other mats are placed one above the other, all overlapping in such a manner that the thatch at every stage is four ply and absolutely water- and light-proof. For the apex a beautifully woven crown is made.

The women are now called upon to take a hand in the game for the first time. It is up to them to plaster the walls inside and out—and the floor. They make endless pilgrimages to the nearest swamp which may be miles away, as, strangely enough, a kraal is seldom built close to water, and fetch many loads of black clay. This they mix freely with cow dung, slap the resulting mess into the walls and over the floor, patting it smooth with their hands until it hardens. The hut is

now complete. The right half of it belongs to the headman when the rotation of months brings him around to that particular wife. There is no question of favoritism; tribal law establishes the formula of a month per wife as long as the months or the wives last. So it is in every other feature of the household arrangement of the headman. He is ritualized to death from before the day of his birth.

During the desultory talk which went on through much of the night between Chipaleca and myself, aided by Five and Madada who were plying two fires in a vain attempt to keep me warm, I gathered certain information which led me to dispatch a messenger in search of Cass with word to meet me at the pool of Chitzolo. This he did and at the same spot we came into conjunction with Bostock and Abrantes who were established in a sumptuous camp and had with them all the women porters we had discharged at Panda. Our joint establishments made the wood of which we took possession look like a bit of the Great White Way.

We passed a gay evening swapping hunting stories while the natives enjoyed themselves more noisily and in the morning, only one good elephant spoor having been reported, I

loaned Madada to Bostock and settled down to a day of much-needed rest. The wind had changed to the north and the weather consequently turned stifling. Cass hung around the camp in great dudgeon because every time he suggested to his hunters that they make a start he was answered by the statement that all the local guides were out with Bostock or looking for elephant spoor, and without one Magudogudo did not dare move.

For days both Cass and myself had been tantalized by glimpses of kudu, the most lordly buck that steps, and a member of that supreme family among antelopes which includes the bongo, the inyala, the sitatunga, and the bushbuck. He is not only a shy and swift beast, but a master of wind tactics and is seldom seen out of thick cover except when dashing from one thicket to another or standing in shadow at the edge of a wood.

The only kudu I have killed was an ungainly cow. As she plunged across my vision in a thick forest I shot her because I had never seen anything like her and was convinced that I was on the point of discovering some unknown beast. Her hornless head, enormous ears, high hump and awkward gallop make of her a fantastic creature difficult to associ-

ate with the graceful buck which carries spiraled horns sometimes five feet long on the curve and which would be out of all proportion to his slim body did he not bear them so lightly and so proudly. Subsequent to that sad day I have followed fresh spoor of buck kudu certainly not less than forty times without ever having earned a shot and of all these arduous trails I cannot remember one which did not lead me down wind.

Barring killing a cow as I had done, Cass had had much the same experience, but of all the men I have shot with he is the most indefatigable supporter of the slogan, "A day in camp brings in no meat." Instead of taking shelter from the broiling sun, he camped on Magudogudo's flank with a pertinacity which must have been maddening to that past master in the knowledge of habits of game and after four hours literally hounded the veteran tracker out into the bush. Never did expedition start more laggingly to rise so suddenly to a dazzling climax. I quote from Cass's journal:

I wanted to go out at 10 A.M. for kudu or eland, but Magudogudo said the only boys who knew the bush were out, also that there was no game in this country. I did not believe it, but consented to wait until after lunch. Men not very keen to go out, but we started at 2 P.M., and twenty-five minutes

from camp Magudogudo saw a kudu and we got down in the grass. I could not distinguish the one he pointed out under a tree until I used my binoculars, as it was thick bush and the buck was in shadow. I finally spotted it dimly and had a very dfficult shot in poor light at neck and shoulders facing me. Used telescope sight; otherwise could not distinguish animal at all on account light, shadows, and bush.

He ran out at shot and I made a hit with the second barrel. Buck ran a few yards and fell flat, only to get up and run away a few seconds later when I thought I had him. As he disappeared I saw another and shot it twice dropping him. We then found blood spoor of first buck and followed it for two hours, leaving it at 5.10 in order to get back to other one and skin head before dark. We took only fifty minutes to go back over ground it had taken us two hours to cover when spooring. Boys said first buck badly wounded and we will surely get him to-morrow. The horns of the one I brought back to camp are fair: 46½ inches on outer curve.

Thus was Cass's bull-headed stubbornness rewarded while I loafed in camp, supercilious as a camel and serenely confident that once more a neophyte was out in the sun, learning by the sweat of his brow to accept the knowledge of his elders. Even the four shots heard distinctly soon after his leaving camp failed to shake my complacency, since no messenger followed them home to fetch meat carriers. To me they meant no more than a fusillade fired at some insignificant duiker, routed from his noontime nap and scurrying successfully for his life.

Toward evening, tired of myself and of wait-

ing for the hunters, I went out to the edge of the *vlei*. Never did man come more suddenly on a theatrical backdrop, stupendous in its sweep and yet savoring of children's blocks and wooden soldiers. The disk of the sun hung brazen in the sky, a wafer of gold leaf, thin as a razor edge. Above the proscenium of the horizon, woolly balls of cumulus clouds, accurately spaced, diaphanous yet apparently heavy, seemed to be defying the laws of gravity so that the eye sought instinctively for the wires that held them up.

Beneath was reality, the earth upon which one's feet were set—gleaming, darkening waters; gray grass, bent to some forgotten wind; maqwaqwa trees, fantastically twisted, and a far, sharp rim of snow-white sand lifting to the somber sheen of the izonzo forest. These extraordinary trees are forever in new leaf and eternally deciduous, so that here and there a single dome, caparisoned in iridescent copper, blazed forth its rebuke to the cheap brass in the glaring heavens. Suddenly the sun dropped from sight as from a broken wire. The clouds dissolved and vanished. Instantly the sky became a vast, unbroken bowl of celadon, apple green, clear and deep as the surface of a pearl.

CHAPTER XI

ELAND

A long shot.—Gun gets credit.—Miquel, a delectable camp.—Eland spoor reported.—Difficulty pointing to a nigger in the woodpile.—Kaffir dogs after the eland.—Chitoto, hairless ape and dude.—Chitoto blamed and expelled.—The spoor free of dog tracks.—How to step in dry leaves.—The spoor freshens.—Up with the quarry.—The shot.—Weight of eland.—Cass goes on.—The night march to Gumbo's kraal.—No safari.—A shot in the night.—Thoughts of lion.—Finding Cass.—We dine at nine and again at midnight.

OF all our camps I would put Miquel at the head of the list for variety and give the palm for accomplishment to Gumbo. Our arrival at the former was marked by one of those trifling incidents just enough out of the ordinary to make a spot live in native song and story. Cass and I, surrounded by at least a dozen of the hunting fraternity in addition to half the *safari*, had come to a halt beside the

site we had chosen for the tents when one of the boys called our attention to a reedbuck which was a mere dun blur in the distance across a swampy swale.

I dismounted, took the .318, put up the four-hundred-yard sight and in the face of half-amused, half-commiserating glances, aimed and fired. The dun blur collapsed as though riven by lightning. Cass put the shot at three hundred yards while I was convinced that it was nearer five hundred and said so. Unfortunately we could not settle the dispute as the bog between us and the fallen buck was impassable. However, it took the men, traveling on a wide arc, little less than an hour to fetch in the carcass without stopping to flay or quarter it.

Another thing that made me think the distance was exceptional was the impression the shot made on the trackers and hunters. Let it not be thought that they gave me credit, for the Kaffir mind is a peculiar mechanism. In all such cases, honor is paid to the gun, seldom to the marksman. The same rule applies in the natives' relations to one another. They have the most rudimentary appreciation of competition, prowess, or courage, all these elements being confused in respectful regard for

the potency of the individual's "medicine." I have seen green natives, taken straight from the wilds, suddenly confronted with steam engines, motor boats, gramaphones, motor cars, and the telephone without evincing the slightest emotion or curiosity. When questioned they calmly sum up the phenomena as "white man's medicine."

It was from the neighborhood of Miquel that contact with the lonely Greek was established and Jack's historic first drunk occurred. It was from Miquel that we killed sable, many reedbuck, more wildebeest, and a spur-winged goose; followed the spoor of kudu, eland, and lion; saw many encouraging elephant tracks; and made a futile visit to the haunt of hippos, which, according to popular fable, are supposed to rise through curiosity to the beacon of a red flag. In our case they failed to bear out the legend.

On the morning of departure from this delectable camp news came in to the effect that a large band of eland had destroyed during the night the *shamba* (vegetable garden), of a neighboring kraal. We gave the *safari* explicit instructions to meet us at Gumbo by nightfall and started out to find the spoor. We cruised for two hours in the temba forest

without success and then, growing impatient, ordered the local guides to take us directly to the kraal which had suffered the depredation. It took us another hour to reach it.

Almost invariably when natives seem to balk at doing the obvious and appear most stupid in the process, they are in reality at their shrewdest. It is their best bet in the art of deception to baffle by indirection. If the bluff goes, well and good; if it fails, they need only continue to look bone-headed and regretful. We had lost two hours and perhaps more in getting on the spoor and Cass and I were growing increasingly conscious of the presence of a nigger in the woodpile when a sudden check on the part of Madada brought the whole expedition to an abrupt halt.

Our main guide, Chitoto by name, was the local chief and the owner of the kraal from which the spoor had started. In appearance he was one of those creatures who emphasize the cousinship of man to the ape. You could not look at his corrugated forehead, monkey-like expression and bullet occiput without smiling; and yet, in his way, he was a great dandy. How is it possible to look like a dude with nothing on but tight-fitting breeks made of the pelt of a civet cat and a single string of

seeds around the neck? I only know that this individual performed the miracle with no other help than his unblemished black skin and a beautifully balanced assagai. In addition he had been conceded the great honor of carrying one of our guns.

After a long frowning study of certain things written on the ground, Madada threw up his head, turned on Chitoto and loosed a torrent of epithets and maledictions upon him. At first the petty chief boldly shouted loud denials; presently he chattered less boldly explanations and excuses, but finally he seemed to wilt. Through it all his face twitched from one expression to another with a rapid fire of comical contortions which would have made his fortune in the movies.

The sum and substance of Madada's accusation was as follows: a pack of Kaffir dogs was harrying the large band of eland. These dogs belonged to Chitoto's people. Chitoto knew that to loose dogs during the presence anywhere in the country of a white man's hunting party was a gross discourtesy. Magudogudo had dogs; Madada himself had dogs; a dozen other headmen (each mentioned by name) had dogs, yet of all these canines not one but had been in strict confinement since

the arrival of the white man. Only the infamous Chitoto had had the colossal impudence to let out his pack to drive the game from the country in the hopes of pulling down one immature calf for the benefit of his individual stomach. Now one could understand why we had been put to so much trouble to get on the spoor. Chitoto must get out at once—beat it back to his women and gruel for dinner.

Cass and I laugh to this day at the effect of the passing of the sentence. Chitoto's face suddenly grew pathetically placid. Mournfully he gave up the gun and, looking for all the world like a schoolboy visited with the shame of sitting with the girls, he wandered off on the back trail, head hanging, dragging his assagai and followed by a clamorous chorus of objurgations and gibes from our entire retinue.

Madada declared that it was useless to follow further the erratic track of the harassed eland, but as we had six hours on our hands and nothing else to do, we insisted on staying on the spoor and were soon rewarded for our trouble by striking a throwback which was free from the accompanying tracks of the dogs. Within two hours we were up with the quarry.

Since leaving camp in the early morning we had never once stepped out of the endless temba forest. The trees were spindling and sparse, offering poor cover, and the ground was carpeted with their tiny brown leaves which crackled minutely but ominously under the most careful tread. To minimize this drawback we had learned from the natives to put our feet down toe first. The reason is obvious, once you think the matter out. Heel first, the sole becomes a sounding board forward; toe first, it tends to smother sound.

Even so, had the game we were after been inyala, kudu, or sable we would never have got a shot, but eland are different. Once tired out as this band undoubtedly was, thanks to the harrying of the Kaffir dog pack, they are slow to take alarm, slower to flee, and accept their doom with a gentle fatalism which is the nearest thing to reproach in the pursuit of African big game. Personally, unless in dire need of meat for the camp, I shall never shoot another eland because of all animals, domestic or wild, I consider them most specifically designed by nature to be petted.

This thought did not occur, however, to either Cass or myself while on the spoor of our first eland bull. We had abandoned our

horses at the first sign of its freshening and, led by Madada and Magudogudo, we crept along parallel lines from tree to tree with a silence which did us both credit. Measured in minutes, long before there was a possibility of a fair shot we could see the game in the shape of shadowy forms standing stolidly in scattered formation. Then, quite suddenly, it appeared astonishingly near. The trackers stopped simultaneously and pointed with their chins by sliding forward the under jaw—a most expressive gesture which says: "There they are. Now it's up to you."

As I had never chanced to kill an eland and had spent the last four days in unsuccessful attempts to get one, Cass had resigned the first shot to me. Picking out what I felt sure was the master bull of the herd I fired and made a mortal hit just behind the shoulder. Cass followed, but by bad luck picked the same bull, raking him fore and aft. He fell with a tremendous thud and the rest of the troop crashed away through the forest and out of sight. I find the following note in Cass's journal:

. Very large and heavy body; 4½ feet from shoulders to brisket. Had been attacked by lion, as one wither badly scarred, wound still open.

I have heard such varying estimates of the weight of a full-grown eland bull, running from 1,400 to 2,000 pounds, that I would have liked to weigh this splendid specimen accurately had it been feasible to do so. His neck alone made a heavy load for two men, and his entire carcass when quartered made heavy going for sixteen carriers. Considering the excellence of the beef and the ease with which eland can be captured and tamed, it is regrettable that so far experiments toward his domestication have been made on a very small scale.

While I stood by to oversee the skinning of the head, Cass with his trackers pressed on in pursuit of the herd. He left us at four o'clock and it was half an hour later before the horses arrived. When I told English, the boy in charge of Bertie, to take up Cass's spoor, he looked at the sinking sun and demurred, but was finally persuaded to make a start alone as all the men who accompanied us were none too many to handle the fallen bull.

Owing to the expulsion of Chitoto we were without a local guide, but Madada knew the direction of a main highway which was blazed in a bee line from Panda to Gumbo's kraal and as soon as the flaying was accomplished and the meat lashed on poles in double loads

we set out across the trackless forest. We were still in it when night fell, but pressed on, cheered by the prospect of a set camp awaiting us at journey's end. Fortunately, there was a fine moon.

After two hours the men began to grumble and assert that we were lost, but Madada never faltered. He checked only once and that was to thrust the gun toward me at a whistle from one of the boys announcing game in sight. I slid from Hawthorne and crept forward, only to be arrested by a loud grunt and a laugh. English, leading Bertie, was the source of the alarm. He had followed Cass's spoor until the light gave out; then by great good fortune had heard us coming and managed to intercept us. As the country was strange to him and infested with lions he was tremendously relieved to rejoin our company.

Suddenly we dropped from the bush into a broad, much-traveled road and from there on had easy going all the way to Gumbo's kraal. To our amazement no camp was in evidence and after a quarter of an hour spent in formal salutations and the exchange of many courtesies, Gumbo informed us that our *safari* had decided that we could not possibly get as far as his kraal and had set camp two hours'

march away. If Cass had been on the spot we might have made the extra journey and visited our wrath on Edy and his associates at the end of it; but since there was no knowing when Cass would come in, I decided to go with Madada, Rungo, Five, and two *indunas* supplied by Gumbo as guides and force the *safari* to do the two hours' march in one.

We had gone but a few hundred yards when we heard a distant report from Cass's rifle. A single shot is never meant for a signal and we stopped in our tracks to puzzle out why anyone should be shooting at eight o'clock at night. Madada was of the opinion that Cass had seen or heard a lion. After a hasty discussion he offered to go after the *safari* with Rungo and one of the guides while I returned with the other and Five to Cass's assistance. This is the only instance in my experience where a native has volunteered to make a night journey unaccompanied by a white man in lion country.

I gave Madada my spare gun and authorized him to use a stick on anyone in the *safari*, from Edy down, who balked at a quick moving of the camp. Next morning we were to learn that a lion had trailed us out and, when we parted, had turned and followed me back

to within sight of our boys' fires at Gumbo. Had he decided to go after Madada and his two companions it is probable that he would have found the courage to attack somewhere in the long journey through the bush.

When I came upon Cass two miles up the highway I found him very nearly played out, but otherwise unharmed. He had killed a cow eland just before dusk, deceived by her exceptionally large horns, but that was not the shot which had alarmed us. He confessed to having fired at a sable bull by moonlight, never thinking of the deductions we would certainly draw from such an unusual proceeding. He was more than glad to accept the loan of Hawthorne and by half past nine we were squatted on mats in one of Gumbo's huts, dining ruefully on peanuts and a single tin of sardines after the most grueling day of our whole trip.

At eleven o'clock the *safari* arrived and by midnight we sat down to a real dinner. Owing to the darkness we set the camp within the kraal, but in the morning moved it to a magnificent location beneath two enormous cashew trees. This was to be our base for nine eventful days.

CHAPTER XII

LION

Lion rumors.—Analysis of fear.—Psychic suspension and Bostock's theory of shock.—What you think you see, and don't.—The chase an antidote for neurosis of the senses.—Natives genuinely afraid only of snakes and lions.—The lion as a tradition and symbol.—His individuality among animals.—Lion talk.—Persuading the natives we were in earnest.—Joanna's kraal.—The midnight scare at Miquel.—The spoor.—Defeat.

FROM the very inception of our trip, lion rumors, lion stories, lion lore, and lion alarms had enlivened our nights and days and upon reviewing the graduated steps which led up to a single successful encounter with the "king of beasts," it is amazing to find how much of the thrill of shooting dangerous game lies in the process of cumulative anticipation. For many years it has been my conviction that nine men out of ten are constitutionally incapable of fear at the actual moment of

danger, and that exactly the same proportion is consistently scared at the thought of peril.

I know one individual intimately who can produce all the symptoms of terror by thinking while he is in New York of going up against elephant, lion, or buffalo in Africa, and who, when he is in Africa, can induce exactly the same phenomena by imagining that he is about to cross Columbus Circle; yet this apparent coward is as apt as not to light a cigarette while he is threading the traffic and will stand steady as the trigger he pulls almost in the shadow of a rogue tusker. A man may deserve a certain amount of credit for deliberately entering the zone of danger, but once it is upon him the probabilities are that he will become as unconscious of his movements as though he had been tapped on the head with a hammer. In the instant of peril the Simon-pure mechanism of the body, independent of what we know as volition, attends to its own protection through the incredibly swift measures of reflex action.

There are two aspects of big-game shooting which to the extent of my knowledge have never before been so much as mentioned in print. One is this state of psychic suspension in moments not only of danger, but of simple

excitement carried to a high pitch, and the other is the theory first put forward to me by Doctor Bostock to the effect that however high-powered the gun, none but the first bullet to hit produces what is technically known as shock. This latter point will be touched on later, but in support of the assertion that there is an actual transposition of the senses of perception at the moment of any thrilling encounter, one may be forgiven the citing of a couple of incidents.

In the case of the inyala my eyes saw only what was necessary and excluded completely the cluster of castor-oil shrubs which must have all but brushed the muzzle of the rifle as it was swung around to cover the fleeing beast. No one who has not been through a like experience can measure the astonishment with which I viewed those bushes upon returning to the spot half an hour after the shot. Subsequently both Cass and myself were to be puzzled by the maddening indecisions which fell upon us when trying to place hits on elephants that appeared to be in full view. Not until we photographed or reconstructed the various scenes of battle did we realize that in every such case the huge animals were partly and sometimes very nearly completely out of

sight, screened by bush so thick that it would have to be broken aside to effect a passage.

The eye, seeing any part of the cumbersome body, immediately visualized the entire beast, but when judgment attempted to step in, unless one could pick out through some opening in the unperceived jungle a definite tell-tale object such as the ridge before the orifice of the ear or the frontal apex of the skull or the rear outline of the six-foot ear flap, a shot became impossible even though one's lying vision was making one's senses reel with the impression that a whole elephant was in plain sight at about three times the width of an ordinary New York brownstone front.

This disquisition on optical illusions under stress is offered as a partial answer to those who wonder how civilized man can find enjoyment in killing wild animals. It is doubtless because the chase still holds its own as an antidote for neurosis of the senses, as a reversion from anæmia to color, as a sort of break in training to the attenuated soul; in short, because it does for man's emotions what a dose of calomel does for his liver. When the big-game hunter no longer gets a thrill from any encounter, he completes an individual evolution and will still be found in the wilds, shoot-

ing for the pot when necessary, but with his perceptions fined to the joys of hunting with a camera or to the yet higher plane of the skillfully hidden watcher who studies by the happy hour the coloration, habits, and intimate mannerisms of the thing he loves best yet often kills.

If you think such a consummation is as easy as it is admirable, try to attain it. A twitching trigger finger is the least of a dozen obstacles of which the greatest is the pressure brought to bear by one's black retainers in whose language "meat" and "game" are represented by the selfsame word, *'nyama*. When food is plenty, well-trained trackers can be held in leash if they respect the sportsman with whom they are working, but in time of famine nothing can restrain some member of the black fraternity from crossing the bounds of consternation into open revolt at the passing up of any chance to surfeit the larder.

The question of sustenance, however, does not enter into the pursuit of lion, which is a sensation and an art without parallel whether from the point of view of the native or that of the white man. Snakes aside, the lion, wounded or unwounded, is the only animal in Africa which inspires unqualified fear in the

inhabitants. They do not care to eat him; their whole preoccupation is to avoid being eaten, and only when his ravages on human life become insupportable do they get keyed up to the point of going after him *en masse*, taking the consequences on these rare occasions with a fatalistic courage which deserves the highest respect, considering that such an encounter seldom passes without two or three fatal casualties.

As to the white man, it is scarcely necessary to emphasize the fact that he very rarely shows inclination to dally in the presence of the tawny star performer among the major carnivora. Calm reason tells him that by actual count there has been a surprising equality in death to the hunter from Cape buffalo, African elephant, and lion, so that to-day the three are invariably conceded even honors as man-killers; but in sensation, if not in practice, the lion heads the list and will continue to head it whatever the evidence of statistics.

Why? Because a world-old tradition has centered upon him, because an entire division of folklore, symbolism, and hyperbole has seized upon his name as the emblem of courage, power, and destruction, but, most of all,

because he represents the supreme gamut of the unexpected, leaping in an instant from the basest cowardice to the overtopping peak of roaring valor. Science has abandoned the attempt to divide his race into species. Maned or maneless, tawny or black, African or Asiatic, his kind is one and the same throughout its range, and alone among animals he has attained to the dignity of an astonishing individualism. Seldom is one lion an index to any other; of two whelps from the same dam, one may be short haired and the other maned, one chicken hearted and the other—well, a lion!

It was at 'Npuxanyane on the banks of the 'Nyasune that the lion talk, usually held in background, began to push forward more than tentative feelers. Over and over again the king of beasts had been mentioned, first loudly when the list of possible game was given out at our first *indaba*, and then in steady diminuendo as we approached the scenes of his activities. The reason was that the native is a born diplomat. Long experience has taught him that out of many *safaris* which go out with the avowed intention of getting a lion, few there be which are not content to busy themselves with other matters until the occasion has passed. As a result, and as much

from a desire not to embarrass his employers as from reluctance to put himself deliberately in harm's way, the black is apt to interject news of lion into the general conversation in the most casual way and to observe placidly but shrewdly the fruit that the seed brings forth.

The report which came to us at 'Npuxanyane to the effect that there had been a slaughter of fourteen goats, two pigs, and a dog at Joanna, a kraal only a few miles away, gave us a chance to put an end to whatever doubts existed in our trackers' minds as to our genuine intentions. Madada was reminded that years ago, on the occasion of his first spooring of an elephant for me, he had been given a present of ten shillings, which had seemed to him munificent. We now stated that we were each prepared to pay one pound prize money to the chief tracker responsible for a successful shot at elephant, but would give two pounds in clinking gold for a lion, besides presents to whoever had brought in the news of the fresh spoor. It took two hours of talk to lead up to the arrangement thus summarized. The bare statement in regard to money would have got us nowhere. Natives of the class of Magudogudo, Madada, and old

Maoia are not driven, but once lifted by enthusiasm they become whole-hearted companions in arms.

"How many were the lions?"

"Five; two grown and three cubs."

"Only one big male?"

"'Ndio."

"How far is Joanna?"

"A day's march."

Incredulity on our part; a long argument culminating in the usual demonstration with leveled arm.

"Should we start with the sun thus," pointing to the eastern horizon, "we arrive so." The arm swings upward to the zenith.

The talk then makes a long detour to fit the march to Joanna into the general itinerary. We still lack elephant, and here is our chance for reminiscence. The importance of elephant is emphasized and enlarged upon until all are for dropping everything else and making straight for the great drinking holes, the makwakwas and the deep, gray bush. But wait. Elephant are important, so important that we have decided to give a whole pound to Magudogudo or Madada, as the case may be; but for lion, for a fair shot at lion, the ante is two pounds. In spite of the cash value of tusks,

we are prepared to pay twice as much for lion.

This is an argument that appeals to the native's fine sense of values. For centuries ivory has been to him the symbol of fabulous wealth. If we will pay more for a shot at lion than for an elephant, we must really want to get one. He is convinced. He begins to visualize the event and from that moment the battle is more than half won. His whole tone changes. Excitement begins to show in his eyes and in his explosive speech. At Joanna, he declares with morbid enjoyment, the horses will doubtless be carried away and eaten; should we persist and dare go to Miquel, no one, not even the *mulungo*, will sleep except by day.

But in the calm light of the early morning, when we propose leaving the horses behind in charge of Chief 'Npuxanyane, the trackers say quite coolly that it won't be necessary. We explain that Hawthorne and Bertie are the property of the Stitchin-ka-le-John, the native name for the W. N. L. A., but Madada is not impressed; he has his own views as to the relative importance of the white man's comfort and some other white man's property. Besides, he can't get excited about lions in daytime.

We up stakes, strike tents, start, and presently ford the 'Nyasune. By nine o'clock we enter the most pretentious kraal in our experience and are amazed to learn that it is Joanna and that the lion incident happened so long ago that its details have faded from memory. A dance in full swing is the only thing that interests Joanna's people. Angry and more than half across the threshold of disillusion, we push on almost at once to Miquel. There we set an elaborate camp and, after an untroubled night and a day on the spoor of eland, spend the *indaba* hour of the second evening jeering at Madada and Magudogudo over the total absence of signs of lion. We go to bed and to sleep. At two o'clock a terrific uproar rends the air. We come up gasping from unfathomable depths of slumber.

"Edy! Edy! What's the noise?"

Within thirty seconds Edy appears before the tent, a gun in one hand and a lantern in the other. He stands listening for a moment and then declares coolly that it is nothing, that the seventy throats of the camp have crashed into that rhythmic hullabaloo simply because one of the horses has broken loose.

Furious at being disturbed, we yell, "*Tula! Tula!*" until at last the order is obeyed and

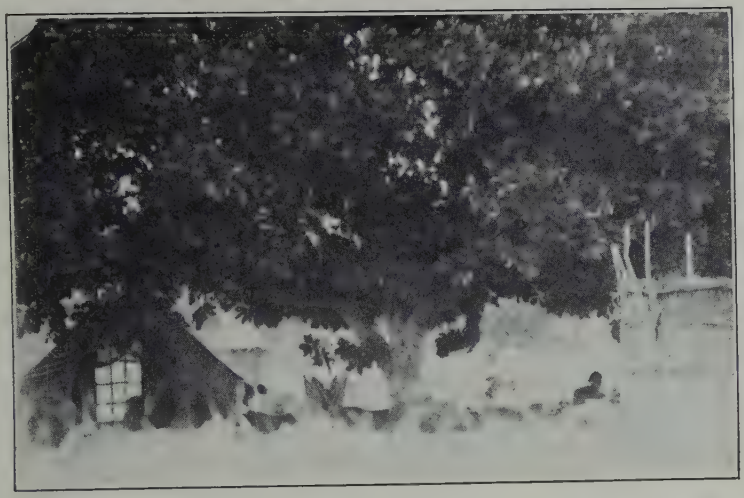
the camp suddenly shuts up. We fall asleep again, but in the morning Cass undertakes a conversation through Jack, the cook, and learns that lions were discouraged from an actual invasion by the ancient formula of "throwing sand in the face." Jack gives a graphic illustration. "The lion is there; me here. I look him in eyes and walk dis way." He moves backward and at each step, hurls sand forward to a great distance with his naked foot. We are led to a spot within twenty yards of one of the porters' outlying fires. It is true. There are the spoors of five lions, the written tale of their stealthy approach, lengthy stay, and ultimate withdrawal. It is no use to swear at Edy. He listens to a long string of futile questions and, being too indolent, or perhaps incapable, to explain that we couldn't have done anything anyway, he merely declares at the end of the tirade, "All right."

We take up the spoor and follow it through miles of izonzo forest until it comes out on an enormous plain. Before us is a vast oval sea of tufted grass, knee high and soggy underfoot. Away to the right stand the serrated ranks of great patches of high reeds. Beyond them is the silvery gleam of open water. The trail

seems to lead diagonally across the open. To save time, two volunteer scouts are sent straight across to examine the far rim of sand that borders the *vlei*, but without waiting for their signaled report we abandon our horses. Led by Madada, Magudogudo, Maoia, and Bongo, we pick up the spoor once more. Although it is still early, the heat is already terrific; for three days the hot north wind has been blowing.

The spoor freshens. We come upon the recent kill of a muskrat, spine crushed and carcass tossed aside. The smell of lion, acrid and nauseating, still cloys the atmosphere. A grim air takes possession of the little expedition; the trackers frequently cast their eyes far ahead, studying grass and reeds for some telltale movement. Only old Maoia preserves a faintly smiling equanimity. He carries his great assagai as lightly as a wand, divides the grass this way and that with its polished shaft, and silently, with smile and gleaming eyes, emphasizes each significant discovery. His calm and faith become a fortress; just to look at him slows down the beating of one's pulse.

When we were in midplain, half a mile from either side, the sound of a whistle reached us



faintly. We looked back to where thirty beaters, drafted from the ranks of the *safari*, were clustered around the horses, and then across to where one of the scouts sent in advance stood against the glaringly white strip of sand which marked the edge of the vast basin, dividing it from a rise dotted with clumps of bush and a sparse forest of temba trees. He held one hand on high, signaling that he had come upon the spoor.

Striking directly across the plain and followed at a short interval by the horses and the entire outfit, we joined him. He stood so still at our approach that it seemed he must have bad news, but we soon learned that he was standing so quietly because he knew that the eyes of the quarry might easily be watching him from the nearest thicket. The trail was very fresh; there in the sand was written the story, not two hours old, of a family frolic, of a giant-pawed feline game of tag. It was read to us in whispers and the deductions from time and the great heat of the day pointed to the conclusion that the lions in all probability were lying up in the shade of the nearest patch of jungle. We started up the slope, and after we had gone some distance sent back to have the horses placed behind the shelter of two

great cashew trees. Had we not taken this precaution the horse boys, ten minutes later, would have had a full view of five lions galloping across the open at a range of only a few hundred yards.

Blissfully ignorant of the anticlimax in store for us, we followed the hot spoor with steadily diminishing pace and increasing caution, only to come upon the day bed while it was yet warm and odorous, but vacated. Its occupants had taken alarm. True to the lion's flair for having an individual impulse for every day in the week, they had decided not to wait for a sight of us, nor to stand on the order of their going. With arms aching from holding guns at the ready during a tense half hour, we plunged forward on the deeply indented spoor at high speed. Down into the plain again it led us and to a thick but small clump of high grass. Here a halt was called and the reluctant beaters ordered into line. As the boldest of them cut across the wind to take his position, he stopped suddenly, turned and grinned.

He was standing only twenty paces away from us, but on the further side of the clump of grass. He had come upon the spoor; the lions had gone on. We did likewise, and in a

few minutes actually struck at right angles the track we had made across the plain scarcely half an hour before. The new trail led us straight into the well-nigh impenetrable fastnesses of a mile-long mass of reeds fully twelve feet high. As we approached the dense growth with sinking hearts, we were electrified by hearing a low reverberating growl and a crashing rush. Cass and his tracker, who were in the lead, saw a tawny flash and the tall canes bending violently; but only for an instant. In less time than it takes to tell it there were only silence, immobility, the deep unclouded sky, terrific heat.

The expedients we used need not be fully narrated. First we penetrated the canebrake until we came upon mud halfway to our knees and soon after met a barrier of rightly named sword-grass through which neither black nor white can pass without shedding blood. Frequently we heard the lions, but luckily they were always going away. Our position was light headed, stubborn, and untenable, but we didn't realize the facts until later. We came out, took stations, and set fire to the reeds, all to no avail. Finally we gave up and almost immediately were attacked by violent headaches and queer feelings in our stomachs. It

was the natural reaction from heat and extreme tension. We made for camp and did not entirely recover from our indisposition for three days.

CHAPTER XIII

LION (CONTINUED)

Peculiarities of the beast as found in the Panda country.—Keating, the goat.—Lion lore.—Real and phantom lions.—Logic nonexistent.—The forgathering at Gumbo's kraal.—Setissa arrives with news of lion.—Setissa as guide.—The fresh spoor.—Anticlimax and buck fever.—Cass resists a monster temptation to shoot first.—A hit by each of us and the pursuit.—How one feels.—The death.—Triumphal progress back to camp.—Prize giving.—The ball in celebration.—Thonga dances and Thonga women.—Preparing mortar to ragtime.

SOME time was to elapse before we again went after lion, but in a sense the king of beasts was always with us. We started our general shooting on September 17th and, beginning with September 22d to the end, I find that almost every page of Cass's journal contains some mention of lion, either fresh spoor noted or reports of depredations at neighbor-

ing kraals. During all this period, however, we had never once heard the reverberating roar which is the most awe-inspiring sound emitted by any beast. This was so contrary to my experience of seven years before in the same country that I am at a loss how to explain it.

From talks with men who have shot lion in other parts of Africa and the writings of Selous and others, I am almost led to generalize on certain peculiarities of the beast as found in Portuguese East Africa, but recognizing that these characteristics may be completely reversed at any time and without notice, I resort merely to the following statements of fact. Lions are, without the slightest doubt, very numerous in the Panda district, but I have never actually laid eyes on but two, both after persistent tracking of very fresh spoor. Of all the incidents reported as occurring in my vicinity, I would say that the ratio of loss of life to that of domestic animals was as one to forty—that is, one human being taken to every forty attacks on goats, pigs, dogs, and even chickens. Is this a predilection? Witness the incident of the taking of the Greek's dog from between his master's legs. Finally, I have never had any success with live or dragged bait.

This last point reminds me that on the day following our chase after the five lions Cass and I acquired for forty-three cents, cash, a goat—a handsome, black-and-white, long-haired and full-grown he goat. It was our intention to use him for bait. Night after night it was to be his lot to be tethered just outside the camp to attract lion. Now lion, under the bounty laws of South Africa in general, are known as vermin. Vain were our hopes; the longer we kept him, the further we had to go for lion spoor. He was fat, but possibly he had the wrong smell. Gradually he acquired the fitting name of Keating[1] and became so established in our affections that, weeks later, we pensioned him for life in the charge of our friend, Mr. Maudsley Baynes, the ruler of Chicome.

Fortunately, our seediness did not incapacitate us to the extent of eliminating the nightly *indabas*, and in the cool of the evening, with pipes going full blast and a modest peg or two of whisky at elbow, we listened by the hour to lion-lore, none the less fascinating because it was sublimely illogical. It appeared that there were "lions for le bush" and "lions for

[1]A household word in England for a powder abhorred by bugs and vermin of all kinds.

le boy"—in other words, real, honest-to-goodness lions and others which were owned. The latter had come into being to supply a need arising from the *mulungo's* law depriving natives of guns. Through witchcraft, le boy (the native term for describing a Kaffir of any age in talking to a white man) had secured the services of a lion, perhaps a member of his own family, to hunt for him. This practice had developed abuses, so that these lions, sometimes known as *kaia*, or house lions, were frequently used to satisfy a private grudge. When a human being was killed by a lion, custom demanded a thorough search for the beast's owner, the general supposition being that bush lions do not dare attack people.

"How can you find out which are *kaia* and which bush lions?"

"Well, in the first place, owned lions do not leave a spoor. You see or hear a lion and fail to find a spoor; you know it is owned."

"But how do you find out who owns it?"

"By following its spoor. Sooner or later you will find the print of a native's foot going side by side with the trail of the lion. Track the native to his home; he is the owner of the lion."

"But you say this lion makes no spoor!"

"Quite so," with a benign scorn for logic, "it doesn't."

"Then how can you follow it?"

Silence; a vacant stare, or a look of commiseration as the native under cross-examination wanders off into garrulous narration of some famous murder trial, finally stating that the reason we had failed to come up with the lot we had been after had nothing to do with material obstacles. It was because those lions were very possibly relatives of the boys, Nickiss, Naiete, and Lice, who had hung back throughout the day, as they were naturally reluctant to assist at the death of their blood relations. On such noncircumstantial evidence, in recent yet happily bygone times, has many an individual been condemned to death.

Gumbo, the kraal at which we found ourselves after the long day of the eland kill, was easily the premier of all our camps, measured by the length of our stay, the importance of the hunting done from it, the almost nightly dances, another meeting with Bostock and Abrantes, and a varying flood of human interest. Within the space of forty-eight hours its population must have risen from a normal baker's dozen of inhabitants to a round three hundred, men, women, and children. Bostock

still had his women carriers, and, forced by circumstances, we had reaccumulated a few of our own as trophy- and water-carriers. Also it chanced that Chief Gumbo had just issued invitations for a series of soirées which had drawn every matron and damsel from a radius of twenty miles. There was something of some kind doing every minute and a vague suggestion of trouble lay thick upon the air.

The compensations, however, were great enough to overbalance all regrets. On the day before Bostock's arrival, while we were idling moodily, waiting for news of fresh elephant spoor, a slim little woman was ushered into our presence with unusual formality by Madada and Magudogudo who asked that an interpreter be summoned at once. Edy was standing near by, but scenting an important story we decided to pass up his habitual, "All right," as a complete translation and called Jack from his kitchen. He came and made of his rendition a graphic art. The woman spoke quietly, tacking one fact methodically to another, but Jack painted the whole into a picture which we could see.

"Name for dis woman Setissa," he declaimed. "She come from kraal, two-three hours' march. She all alone. Her man, boy

for you look see elephant. He not come home two-three days. Dis morning sickiss o'clock dis woman she see lion make plenty noise, take chickens her kraal. She start come away tell white man, get present. Lion come back; she go back. She yell like hell. Lion go away; she come away. She here. She say, 'Give present, please.' She run plenty fast."

Ten minutes and we were off, thirty strong. In the van of the expedition traveled the slim little Setissa at a surprisingly fast pace. Heretofore I had never known a woman to occupy any position but the tail end of a *safari* and as a consequence had had no occasion to watch an unburdened female of the African species eat up the road. It is possible that Setissa was herself an exception, but however that may be, the grace of her movement, the suppleness of her erect body, the steadfastness of all her poses in action and her smooth speed struck one with the force of a contrast and a revelation. The men traveling behind her seemed suddenly heavy.

When we reached her miserable abode, protected by the mere vestige of a rotted encircling thorn hedge, she traced rapidly the movements of the lion with a swinging hand, then led us into the bush and put us on the spoor

of his last get-away. Through it all she never smiled nor showed the slightest excitement. As we withdrew she stood watching us with such a calm look in her eyes that we could not help but wonder at the value her level mind was putting on our enterprise. One could almost imagine that should her expression become vocal it would say, "Men; boys; children!"

We left the horses and beaters behind. As I had won the toss for the first shot, my trackers, Madada and Maoia, with myself led the way, followed closely by Cass, supported in turn by Magudogudo and Bongo. It was rolling, almost open country, dotted with clumps of a species of landolphia vine and very sparsely forested with temba and thorn trees. By good fortune the grass was dry, fallen, and scarcely knee high. For two miles we walked rapidly on the easy spoor; then Madada almost halted, arrested by some faint indication that just there the lion had been thinking of lying down for a nap. From that point on the trackers moved with a cautiousness which by implication started the blood to pounding in my temples.

Your keen hunter, having missed a chance at any longed-for game, while life lasts, be-

lieves that the selfsame shot will come to him again and that he will be a little quicker, a little surer. That it never happens that way means nothing against man's habit of reconstructing conditions on experience. So, now, I began to visualize the one occasion upon which I had seen a lion in the bush at ten paces, shot where his shoulder ought to be, and probably by the guidance of a merciful God, hit a tree. What if that should happen again to-day? What if—

Madada suddenly stepped aside and pushed me ahead violently, whispering loudly, as he did so, "*Tsutsuma!*" Absolutely at a loss, I gazed wildly this way and that. The word was a totally new one. For all I knew, it might mean, "He is lying down," or, "He runs," or, "He is charging." For a ghastly moment I felt superlatively rattled. I was still standing in an agony of indecision when Madada strode forward briskly to pick up the spoor again. The explanation of the puzzling word, obtained subsequently, is tendered to psycho-analysts as a shining example of reversion. Madada had meant to use the familiar phrase, "*Tutuma*" ("He's trotting off"). But so great was the suppressed excitement under the mask of his outward calm, that he

had unconsciously reverted to a little-known dialect of his childhood and given vent to "*Tsutsuma*"—as he pronounced it an unrecognisable explosive sibilation.

With a lift of his chin to signify that the lion had moved on, he led the way swiftly until the trail reached the spot where he had caught a glimpse of the quarry; then he slowed down again and was working carefully, with eyes fastened on the ground, when Magudogudo in the rear grunted boldly, seized Cass by the arm, and pointed out the lion, traveling in a direction which would keep him hidden from me for a second or two. Resisting a monster temptation, Cass hurried to my side, and a moment later the great beast, slinking cat-footed through the grass, came into full sight, broadside on at about eighty yards.

If fervent prayer can guide a bullet, mine traveled in a groove. The lion's long body seemed to telescope and arch into the air. As it came down, Cass followed with a raking shot, scarcely a second intervening between the two hits. "*Chahile!*" cried the boys, not loudly, as they usually did when game was hard hit, but with a sort of deep-toned exaltation.

Throwing caution to the winds, Cass and I rushed pellmell after the wounded beast, caught sight of him moving away at a heavy lope, fired wildly, and then came slowly to our senses. Had we had more experience, we would have known by his actions and, above all, by his silence, that he was very sick; but as it was, we took up the blood spoor with feelings in which exultation, as yet, held little part.

We came finally upon the enemy lying between two trees, head up, eyes to the front. He did not turn to look at us and made no sound. We might have made pictures of him at our leisure, for my first shot had caught him through the lungs, an ideal hit, and Cass's had raked him from flank to neck. To all intents and purposes he was a dead lion, but somehow visions of a roaring charge yet seethed through our brains. Still held in the grip of excitement, we finished him off. As lions go, he was not very large and, alas! we knew him for a chicken snatcher; but even so, such as he was, he was our very own, and who will dare deny that five minutes of him gave us more thrills than a cycle of Douglas Fairbanks!

It is a matter of great regret that of the

many pictures we took of him after death, none does him justice. In reality he was a full-grown male lion in good condition and measured eight feet three inches from nose to tip of tail. His upper canine teeth were just under two and a half inches, smooth and sharp. There was nothing showy about his mane, but he had one, of the same monotonous sandy dun color as the rest of his body, bar the tip of his tail which was black.

The men dragged him out, trussed him on two poles, and started for camp at such a swift pace that our horses were forced into a trot and finally into a lope. The "boys" raced along beside the bearers, diving in to relieve them every few hundred yards in such a manner that there was never a pause in the headlong rush. Throughout the initial part of the short journey the whole crowd roared a song and chorus in the pluperfect staccato time of which only the African is master. With difficulty I persuaded Five to turn blood-shot eyes on me for the moment it took him to make a brief translation of the filthiest song on record. But as we approached Gumbo's kraal the tune and words suddenly changed, rising to the pure frenzy of the Song of Victory: "*Ho! Cha - we - akambe! Chibanda ochaka!*"

The whole village swarmed out to meet us and milled around the sweating bearers as they finally deposited their load beneath a tree within the kraal. Madada was handed two pounds in gold. Setissa approached and was given cash and her choice of a dozen brilliant *machekas*, of half a dozen designs in blaring handkerchiefs and of pounds and pounds of strings of beads. Are there fashions in loin cloths and necklaces in Africa? There are. We were to end our trip with a large amount of material which was scorned because it was not in the mode, and of beads because they were a size too large or a shade too light.

That night a great ball was staged in which every one took part except the chiefs, the head trackers and our personal entourage. It began with the dancing of men and boys in formation and unison, interspersed every half hour or so by an exhibition by a single expert. These volunteers, keen to show off, were not men of special repute in any other walk of life. They were all rather dandified in their appearance and there was a subtle something in the manner with which the crowd roared at their antics, egged them on and applauded their skill, that seemed to establish the lounge lizard in Africa on the same plane as is his elsewhere.

While the men held the floor, Magudogudo and Maoia condescended to grace the celebration with their smiling presence, but when the women took charge the two old chiefs began to grow nervous and presently slipped away. The female contingent started out decorously with set figures of six, reducing to four and then to two, until all had taken part many times; but as the night wore on and pulses began to boil over to the feverish syncopation of clapping hands, reverberating tomtoms, and the shrill chorus of the singers, one dusky bacchante after another stepped forward to perform breath-taking contortions in the *danse du ventre* with variations. These soloists did not depend upon beauty in any sense to enthuse their audience, but on astounding muscular control of the stomach, thighs, and breasts; and when an old hag was threatening to eclipse all her predecessors with her specialized skill, Cass and I decided that we had seen more than enough and withdrew.

It may be an overstatement to say that in all of the Thonga dances, some of them rich in symbolism and depiction, the parts played by the men and boys are invariably rooted in the joy of movement and action, while those of the females are as invariably grounded in

sex appeal, but such has been my general observation. However, one should not judge either cause or effect without due consideration of the profound divergence between the customs of Africans and modern Europeans as regards femininity *en bloc*.

Chastity among Thonga women in the sense of repression does not occur before marriage, as with us, but after.[1] The freedom of childhood, the gloriously happy period in any Kaffir's life, is the identical freedom of the birds in the air, and, pathologically speaking, the scheme seems to work out in the long run fully as well as does ours. This fundamental reversal, so shocking at the first clash to Anglo-Saxon conceptions, cannot be comprehended without a reminder of the basic part played by property as the corner stone of the entire social fabric of the native.

Up to the day of her marriage the Thonga girl is merely part of an element and, always according to her fancy, belongs to the world

[1] "The *gangisa* custom is, from our point of view, very immoral. Among natives it is not censured at all and it would be more accurate to speak of *ammorality* than of *immorality* among them on this particular point. A boy who has no such flirt, no *shigangō*, is laughed at as a coward; a girl who refuses to accept such advances is accused of being malformed."—*The Life of a South African Tribe*, by Rev. Henri A. Junod; Imprimerie Attinger Frères, Neuchatel, Switzerland.

as does sunshine, water, or air; but once bought and paid for, she assumes individuality and accrues to the tribe as a definite asset. From that moment she is owned in a far broader sense than mere possession by a husband and steps over the limits of monogamy at her peril. Nevertheless, almost from the day she is weaned to far beyond the passing of her own heyday, deliberate incitement is one of the most legitimate of her many industries.

Many of the dances of the men mark a pause in the syncopation with a crash of the right feet in unison, so violent that the earth seems to shake. On a lift of the chorus, the right knee is raised almost shoulder high and then, to a reverberating, "*Hungh!*" the whole foot is brought down with a terrific shock. Weeks later, Cass and I were at a large government station and heard familiar strains of music coming from a hole in the ground in the midst of the compound and on the site of a prospective building. We strolled across and found half a dozen natives fooled by a clever administrator into applying their terpsichorean art to the kneading of mud for the walls! One boy sang and clapped time, while the others brought down their right feet in unison once every fifteen seconds.

CHAPTER XIV

ELEPHANT

Idleness inseparable from elephant hunting.—The preparatory indaba.—Elephant scouts.—Nature of their work.—Elephant bush not a generic term.—Reporting a spoor.—Hangover keeps Madada in camp.—Emotional aspects of following elephant spoor.—The old trackers fail us.—We come upon elephant in spite of them.—Anticlimax.—Explanation: head-on collision with ancient taboo.—Another day and a fresh start.—Madada as master tracker.—The encounter and the crash of the falling bull.

TO the restless spirit or even to that methodical activity which thinks it can get the most out of the passing hour only by being up and doing, the idleness which is almost inseparable from elephant hunting is extremely irksome. During the weeks preceding the establishment of the great camp at Gumbo, there had been not a day and scarcely

an hour when one could not slog with some definite object in view whenever the spirit moved and as long as flesh could stand the pace.

Both Cass and myself had been exceptionally diligent. As a result, we had combed an enormous extent of country and practically completed our bag of all the possible antelope of the region. We had thus acquired a habit of packing the twelve hours of daylight chock-full of action, and at least to Cass, the sudden lull of patient waiting in camp for news of fresh elephant spoor came as an unwelcome revulsion. By nine o'clock of the first idle morning he was like a drug addict cut off from his daily allowance.

The night before, we had held a mighty *indaba* during which Madada gave a masterly exposition of our strategic location within striking distance of four great elephant-bush tracts. At the end of his discourse six local men of the forest who had been crouching near by, listening to every word that fell from his lips, were ordered forward to receive their instructions.

It is difficult to transcribe the impression that these elephant scouts invariably give. Most of them look as if they had been molded

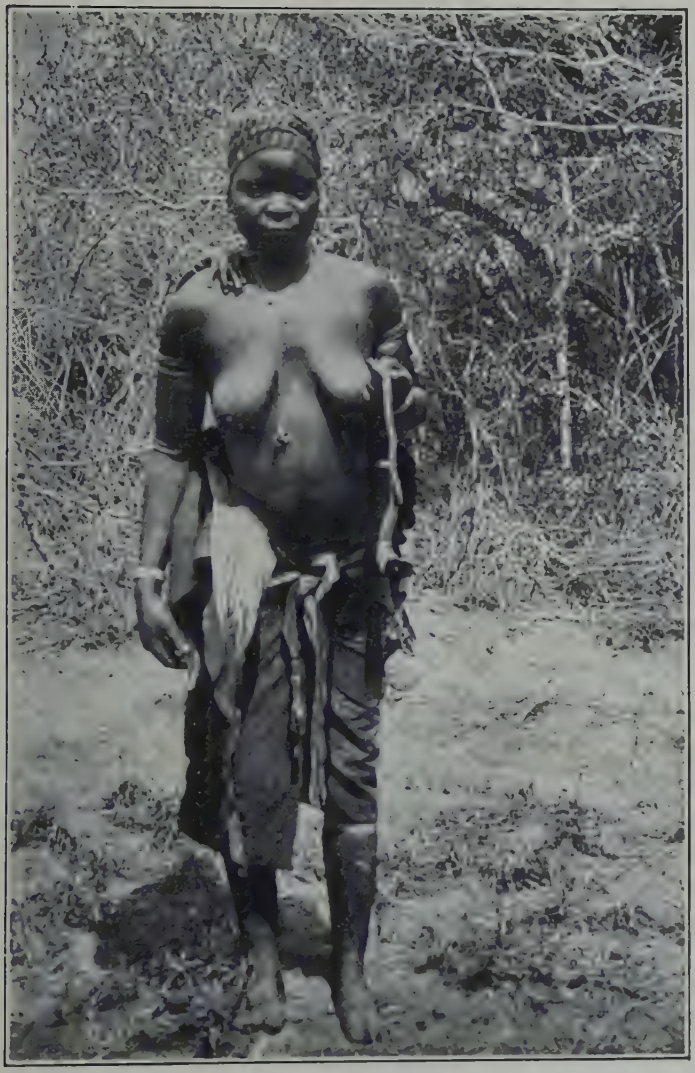
from earth, dry leaves, and neutral shadows. They seem to belong back of protective coloring itself, so that coming upon them deep in the forest one has the sensation of approaching something as native and fixed as a weathered ant hill or the stripped trunk of a dead tree. Only their beady eyes are burningly alive and swift in motion as the forked tongue of a snake. Their endurance is phenomenal and in many instances they appear to be immune from fear rather than actively courageous. They do not form a guild; they just seem to happen where elephants happen.

To form an idea of their work one must understand certain elemental factors connected with the peculiarities and habitat of elephants in Portuguese East Africa south of parallel 22, a section comprising roughly three hundred square miles, of which I have intimate knowledge. The life of elephants in this region is as regular in radius and action as the swing of a pendulum and can be arbitrarily divided between "out of the bush" and "in the bush." With rare exceptions they leave cover only at night and invariably in search of water. Having drunk, bathed, and otherwise disported themselves, they feed back through forest and makwakwa thickets, re-

turning to dense cover at daylight or very soon thereafter.

Elephant bush is not a generic term that one can apply to any sort of jungle. In the district of which I am speaking it is a specific growth which, once seen and experienced, is never forgotten. If approached through a forest, the great trees suddenly dwindle, scatter, disappear, and beyond a bare interval the elephant bush stands as sharply defined as a boundary wall. It is formed of tough saplings, gray of bark and lichen covered, with slanting and intertwined lateral branches bearing tiny spotted oval leaves which afford no shade. This fundamental mass is further interlaced with innumerable creepers and thorny acacias, so that it is practically impassable to man except where the great beasts have first strolled through it. Every few hundred yards it is topped by a giant, isolated tree, and it is in these oases of shade that elephants are found asleep or drowsing through the heat of the day.

The location and size of these tracts are, of course, well known to the scouts. It is their duty to be at the edge of the bush at the first peep of dawn and to travel along its margin until they come upon fresh spoor, either the



outgoing spoor of the night before or the returning track of the morning. Having come upon the spoor, they must determine whether it is of males or females and, in the case of the former, decide if any of the bulls is worthy of the white man's attention. Having found a spoor to his satisfaction, the scout measures it, breaks a switch to show its exact longest diameter, and hurries into camp with his news. If the hunter has grown restless and slipped away after reedbuck or guinea fowl for the larder, he misses a chance which may not reoccur for a month.

Our first day of waiting was a dead blank. The second was enlivened by the lion hunt, but on the third the most earthy of our brown men turned up with news of three big elephant. He slipped into camp unobtrusively and stood in silence for some moments beside Magudogudo who, to us, was merely Cass's first tracker; but to the scout was hereditary chief, uncrowned prince of a long line of kings.

Magudogudo greeted him quietly and the man replied in the same low tone. We saw him hold up three fingers of his right hand, realized that he brought news, and began to get excited; but not until the scout had finished every detail of his report did Magudo-

gudo or his henchman pay the slightest heed to our summons. Then they came to us, followed by Maoia, Madada, Bongo, and a great troop of lesser hunting lights, and asked formally for an interpreter. We applied the Socratic method to determine the following points: the number of the elephants, the size of the spoors, for what bush they were headed, what time they had passed, and how long, by the sun, it had taken the scout to reach camp after his discovery.

While he talked Edy and Mohamet wiped the grease out of the guns and stacked them, got out ammunition, prepared two pocket lunches, filled the water canteens, and ordered the horses. It was not until we were mounted and ready to start that Madada, bleary eyed from a tremendous drunk in celebration of the death of the lion, announced that he could not possibly leave camp. His excuse was that he dared not trust the curing of the lion pelt to any other hands.

We did not attach any special importance to his defection as during the *indaba* it had been announced that Cass was to have the first elephant. Such being the case, Magudo-gudo was to be the main tracker of the day and all other experts would act simply as his

aids. Old Maoia, Madada's father, and in his own right the most famous native elephant killer of the Panda country, stood ready to assume the post of chief adviser.

By ten o'clock we were off. In the van walked the little brown man who had brought in the news of the spoor. After him followed Magudogudo and Maoia, each carrying a glistening .470 double-barreled cordite elephant gun. Then came Cass mounted on Bertie and myself on Hawthorne. Behind us were the second guns, mine the .318 Accelerated Express, Cass's his .350 Rigby Magnum, and behind the bearers of these came the usual string of retainers headed by the horse boys, Rungo and English.

A little before noon we came on the spoor and after the trackers had checked it up and found that the report brought in by the scout was true in all essentials, we dismounted to take up the trail of the three bulls, one of them an exceedingly large beast, judging by the size of his footprint which measured twenty-three inches from toe to heel. It was a cloudy day and as we struck into the bush a few drops of rain fell, dampening our spirits far more than they did the ground because we knew that half an hour's downpour would ruin our chances.

With the exception of leopard I have hunted every species of dangerous game in Africa and it is my opinion that following elephant spoor to the point of encounter is the most exciting sport known to man. The reasons for this are many. The unrivaled size and power of the quarry, the danger of the enterprise and the immemorial lure of ivory are factors whose importance are self-evident, but the one characteristic above all others which puts a distinguishing stamp on elephant hunting is the measured crescendo by which one passes, moment by moment and hour by hour, from cold blood to warm, and then to hot, and finally to a sudden white blaze of internal turmoil.

Every stage in the emotional curve is ponderously marked. First the spoor, hours old, but mighty, sets the note of the hunt; then the large loaves of sign, cold, worried by big black beetles, sound it again. Torn bush, a felled tree a foot in diameter, a branch ripped from a breath-taking height, a shoulder-rub ten feet from the ground, lead up and on through the diapason until one reaches what might be called the zone of presence. Here a sheen still glazes the monster's puddling and the sign is warm and odorous. The elephant may yet be on the move and the actual en-

counter an hour—two hours—away; nevertheless the lingering, pungent smell of the beast seems to assume body, and from that moment continues to hang like a heavy cloud within the lesser shadows of the forest.

Such were the sensations for which Cass had been prepared, but we had been on the actual spoor for less than an hour when misgivings began to assail us. Magudogudo and old Maoia, the latter an especially expert tracker, declared themselves to be at a loss time and time again. They laid the blame to the very light shower which had fallen, saying that it had made old and fresh spoor almost indistinguishable. We believed them until even my amateurish eye discovered their gross negligence by noticing that after a long loop we were back to our own tracks. That is, we had lost an hour by following the elephant around a circle which he had made some time in the early morning. Through the interpreter we loosed upon the bent heads of the two old trackers a string of epithets which they did not mind in the least, and then mocked them by threatening to put Quambe and Five in the lead. That insult had its effect, but even so the two famous hunters seemed to work reluctantly and with a hang-dog air so differ-

ent from their usual keenness that we were even more puzzled than annoyed.

There is no telling what subterfuge they would have brought into play had not the silence been pierced by the squeal of an elephant off to the left. Abandoning the spoor against every rule of the game, Magudogudo, led and perhaps influenced by Maoia, plunged into the impassable bush directly toward the sound. There was no possible passage and no excuse as the spoor we had been following for hours still led directly into the wind. Pushing forward, we prodded their disappearing buttocks with the barrels of our rifles and by signs, the interpreter having been left behind, forced them back to the path the elephant had plowed. Presently there came another squeal and they tried the same trick again, but this time we were frozen in our tracks by an earthquake of sound which, once heard, is never forgotten. It was the rumbling in the stomach, not of one elephant, but of several—a rumbling which can be faintly described as reverberating thunder weirdly intermingled with a monster moan.

The shock of the discovery that our lone spoor had led us straight into a large herd of elephants left us completely befuddled so that

it was some moments before Cass and myself crawled out from the bush and around until our eyes fell on a miserable anticlimax to our expectations in the form of a cow framed by a funnel of foliage and so small that she looked like a toy—a German toy! I have yet to meet the man who has any use for a female elephant except as a strictly breeding proposition. To kill one means a fine of three hundred dollars, and, as though the news had been whispered around, they stand ever ready to attack on the slightest provocation. As a consequence, we took just one look and withdrew, Cass murmuring to himself and to me and to the world at large, "Is that an elephant?"

We found the two trackers hunched on their heels under a thorn tree and noting their sheepish expressions, a thought suddenly struck me. How did we know that the abandoned spoor would have led into the herd? The chances were that it did, but there was one chance in ten that it did not, and one chance in ten, with elephant, is always a good bet. Employing my whole Thonga vocabulary, my hands and eyebrows, I finally made them understand an order to get back on the job, whereupon old Maoia shook his head from side to side and Magudogudo hung his, acqui-

escing in the mutiny. Puzzled, angry, and discouraged, we whistled for the horses, mounted, and returned to camp.

An air more sad than hostile hung over the *indaba* we held that night. We knew that point-blank questions would avail us nothing, and it was only after talking over every other subject under the sun and then putting everybody in good humor by a long, solemn seance with the bones, that we approached the long mystery of the spoiled day. Had Edy been interpreting, we would have remained forever in the dark, but fortunately Five was the medium. I transposed his voluble Portuguese into English for Cass's benefit.

Five, as has been previously indicated, was an accidental find and had been promoted from the mean ranks of the common porters to the grade of a personal attendant, owing partly to his linguistic accomplishments but most particularly to an extraordinary faculty for calling a spade a spade. He spoke the dregs of four languages and the idea that there was such a thing as a shocking word or thought in anyone of them was totally beyond his mental orbit. Individually, he had no use for indirect action when demanding information or for any division of euphemism in framing a

translation. His one-word queries often fell with the thud of a sledge-hammer and his interpretations just as frequently carried the tingling shock of an ice-cold douche.

Such an interpreter is invaluable. Five weeks of Five taught me more about the inward workings of the Thonga than five years of his many predecessors and it was due to his complete unreserve that we learned what had queered our first day after elephant. It developed that we had unknowingly suffered a head-on collision with one of the most ancient taboos of the tribe, the law which makes sexual continence binding on every member of a hunting *safari* throughout the duration of an expedition. This rule is so interwoven with the traditions of the Thongas that it is impossible positively to state its origin.[1] The explanation which the natives put forward most readily is based on grounds of physical fitness, but it is far more probable that the taboo originated as a matter of prac-

[1] "The taboo—the forbidden thing—of savage life is another thing very elemental in man's make-up. He had tendencies to fall into habits and establish inhibitions for reasons that he either did not discover or easily forgot. These became fixed and sacred to him and any departure from them filled him with dread. Sometimes the prohibition might have some reasonable justification, sometimes it might seem wholly absurd and even a great nuisance; but that made no difference in its binding force." "The Mind in the Making," by James Harvey Robinson.

tical policy in the days when hunting parties were gone from home for months at a time and penetrated strange country where dilly-dallying would surely lead to trouble.[1]

Madada had given as an excuse for staying in camp the necessity of personally caring for the lion pelt, but the reason we consented to leave him behind was that he was drunk. What we did not realize was that he was just drunk enough to do us a bigger mischief through being left behind than he could possibly have done had he been with us. Before we had been out an hour he sent a runner who had whispered to Magudogudo and Maoia that some unspecified individual in our following had fallen from grace on the night before. There was no proof, not even any circumstantial evidence. Madada may have seen the offense in a day dream or his befuddled brain may have made him subconsciously jealous of our success in his absence; but the mere suspicion was enough to gum our whole day.

[1] Closely allied to this taboo is the belief that when a native comes upon elephants in the act of mating it is a sure sign that his wife is at that moment committing an infidelity. Here again is a case where a little logic leads into a morass of questions. What if the native has several wives? What if several natives discover the elephants simultaneously? All that goes by the board; a lawsuit is in order and the court, aided by the divinatory bones, will decide.

From the moment the rumor had been planted in the minds of the two old trackers, they were convinced that should we come up with the elephant he would get the best of the encounter and a catastrophe would befall. Hence their reluctant spooring and final downright refusal to proceed.

Fortunately, even in Africa, every fresh dawn brings its new mood, and two days later a thoroughly chaste company with fully restored morale left camp promptly upon receipt of news of a fine big bull which had returned during the night to the great bush near Chipaleca. Before ten o'clock we were on the spoor and followed it until noon when two events coincided to lower our high spirits—a flurry of rain fell from the overcast sky and the trail of the lone tusker which we were following merged into that of a large milling herd.

To meet the emergency, everybody except Cass and myself turned tracker. We were not in elephant bush proper at the time, but under enormous trees towering above a thick undergrowth of vines and shrubs broken up by innumerable elephant runs. Throughout this terrain our entire retinue opened fanwise, wider and wider, gradually turning back on the extremities. Time and again we were sum-

moned by a whistle and sometimes would actually take up a spoor, only to abandon it upon Madada's arrival and rejection. His decisions were never questioned and it was on this day that he established himself once for all in our estimation as head and shoulders above his older rivals by his exhibit of the rarest quality of a tracker—pertinacity, the dogged refusal to accept any substitute for the one main spoor.

Finally every one else gave up and gathered disconsolately about the spot where Cass and I sat on the trunk of a fallen tree and glimpsed, at longer and longer intervals, the comings and goings of Madada. He was covering the vast network of spoors like a coursing hound, his work made infinitely more difficult through the fact that the dampened ground wiped out many of the shaded differences between one footprint and another which ordinarily supply the tracker with a continuous check on all the movements of the quarry and enable him to estimate the lapses of time between any two.

After half an hour and when he was in plain sight of us, less than forty yards away, he suddenly straightened and raised a hand. By a process of elimination he had picked on a spoor which had already been examined many

times as the freshest of all the wanderings of our special bull. Our spirits had been so depressed that we joined him with misgivings. We held to a sneaking suspicion that he had tired of unsuccessful effort, but had not the heart to call off the hunt for the day. Before we had gone a mile, however, we realized what an injustice we had done him, for single handed he had threaded the maze and brought us out from the herd as the bull had come out. The tusker's spoor once more marched alone and we were on it.

The sight of a tree six inches in diameter and snapped off four feet from the ground, which, in turn, was thoroughly plowed up in the elephant's best destructive style, offered the first broadly written indication of his recent passage. Madada spent some time in studying broken branches and the disturbed soil and I took advantage of the lull to ask him whether the moment had come for us to take over the heavy guns.

He did not know. Ordinarily the progress of an elephant is as clearly marked as the ascending keyboard of a piano. Had the day been stinging hot instead of cool and overcast, the quarry at this hour would be surely snoozing in the shade; and before picking the spot

for his nap he would just as surely have milled around one or two big trees and discarded them when he found he was not yet quite sleepy enough. In addition, we were confronted by the difficulties arising from the cursed flurry of rain, as we had not yet reached the stage where it would prove an unmixed blessing, namely, the point where the shower would have *preceded* the spoor.

From the broken tree, the spoor made straight for genuine elephant bush, and as we approached its apparently solid gray wall I urged Cass to take his heavy gun. He was reluctant to do so, but he was to learn on a subsequent occasion the agony of discovering an elephant at thirty paces and being absolutely without means of giving the news to a companion only three yards away, when to whisper, break a twig, or whistle might have precipitated on us a four-ton avalanche of flesh.

He took the gun, but half an hour of fast spooring along a tunnel blazed through the jungle elapsed without any sign that we were gaining on the quarry. Invigorated by the cool day, the elephant was feeding beyond his usual time, and even left the thickness of the gray bush to wander in a region which was

half forest, half jungle. We had just broken out into this relative freedom when the crack of a branch cut the silence like a pistol shot. Every member of the party became petrified for an instant. The sound had come from a point on our left, at right angles to the direction we had been following. Our hearts sank; the wind was wrong.

Madada and his father, old Maoia, were the first to recover. They stretched to their full height and darted their eyes hither and thither, making a swift survey of all possible openings in the bush; then, by a common instinct, they signaled and started on the same detour, Cass at their heels and I close behind him.

Madada crouched and moved swiftly, as though making for a determined point. Maoia, never so calm as when at close quarters with dangerous game, walked erect, eyes and ears alert. Before we had covered the quarter of an arc they both stopped. Maoia half turned, raised his assagai, and pointed. Our eyes followed his direction. On the instant the great bulk of the tusker swung into view at fifty-eight paces, an exceptionally long range for elephant. Determined to get his first elephant, whatever happened to himself, Cass pulled both triggers of his double-barreled .470 cor-

dite gun simultaneously, and my shot followed so closely that the three reports were telescoped into one terrific percussion. The bull went down with a mighty crash.

CHAPTER XV

ELEPHANT (CONTINUED)

Theory of organic and nervous resistance.—Night scene in camp.—Keating has a protecting fire.—Lion rumor.—Over one hundred and four loads of elephant meat.—Cass's narrative of the taking of second elephant.—Tusker of great age.—Three elephant reminiscences: The miraculous shot, the sleeping elephant, the quartering shot.—Estimate of surviving elephants in Portuguese East Africa.—A sane scheme for preservation.—Tusk extraction.—The unlocked bag.—Thonga characteristic and possible destiny.

WE rushed forward and found the elephant lying on his side, rolling ponderously and thrashing wildly with his trunk. In spite of nine more bullets from the .470's and several from the supporting guns, also of powerful caliber, he lived for forty minutes. The position of the bulky body made a direct heart shot difficult and it may be argued that our knowledge of elephant anatomy was at fault

and that none of the shots directed point blank at the great beast's brain, spine, and lungs went home, but I wish to put forward here the remarkable theory first suggested to me by a casual remark of Dr. L. Bostock, frequently mentioned in these pages, and who, by the way, cannot be held responsible for the following elaboration.

Crudely stated, this theory divides the vitality of an animal into organic and nervous resistance. A perfect shot is one which, finding a vital spot, combines maximum shock with maximum destruction and produces instantaneous death. Now here is the conclusion offered for pundits to wrangle over: though the first shot delivering its total energy by staying in the body of the target fail to hit a vital organ, it nevertheless completely destroys nervous resistance. If that is a fact we have this revolutionary axiom: *Of a series of high-powered bullets to hit a live mark, only the first shot carries any shock.* The rest simply plow through flesh, *ipso* flesh, producing no general reaction whatever—only an intrinsic destruction. Consequently the possibility is advanced of establishing nervous resistance as the fluid factor in life, the container of organic unity, whose destruction by an initial shock occa-

sionally separates vital organs from their vitality, so that, for a short space, heart, brain, spine, and lungs live independently and can actually be killed one at a time![1]

Cass's elephant fell at three o'clock in the afternoon, after five hours of difficult spooring, with no intermission for lunch. At four we made a bee line for camp, where we arrived just at sundown, tired, hungry, happy, and sad. The acquisition of this major trophy marked the beginning of the end; our joint bag was complete, except that Cass longed for a lion all his own and I hankered for the elephant allotted to me in my license. We had "gone in" for four weeks and stayed six. For

[1] I confess that when I first put forward this theory, especially its final broad deduction, it was with my tongue over halfway in my cheek, but since writing the above paragraph several incidents have forced me to take the matter more seriously. For one thing, I had occasion to examine the skull of a hartebeest killed in the earliest days of my inexperience. The shot entered the left forehead and issued behind the base of the right horn, scooping out the entire cerebrum. The beast began to run in circles and, seeing that he was badly wounded, I turned my attention to others of the herd of five. At least two minutes must have elapsed before I could switch back to the first animal and he was still running in circles. I walked fully a hundred paces toward him before raising my rifle for a second shot at him, but just as I was about to pull trigger he fell dead. A few weeks ago, when I recounted this incident to a well-known New York anæsthetist, he not only told me of an almost identical experience of his own on shooting away half the brain of a squirrel with a small-caliber rifle, but volunteered the information that the lack of shock attendant upon operations on the brain would

over a week we had been living almost entirely on the country; manioc instead of potatoes, native beans for rice, wild honey for sugar, pawpaws for prunes. The rains were already whispering their warning, more final by far than the arbitrary close of the shooting season.

Bathed, dressed, and fed, we lay full length in our hammock chairs. Above and behind us stretched the blackness of the low-hanging, wide-flung limbs of the giant cashew trees. Directly before us was Gumbo's kraal, lit up with the flares of bonfires across which cut the silhouettes of a horde of natives, gathered against the meat pilgrimage of the following

provide a constant source of amazement to any layman. The indirect but important bearing of such evidence on the theory propounded above can easily be seen. The brain is the center where nervous resistance can most readily be neutralized instantly. In the two cases cited, the sudden elimination of the brain left the other organs to function independently for an appreciable length of time. I have also in my collection of data the following astonishing case. A squirrel ten feet up a tree was shot with a small-caliber rifle, dropped to the ground, ran around in a circle, climbed the tree again to a point higher than the original one, and then fell dead. On being picked up it was found that the bullet had literally torn out the heart piecemeal from its body. Now accept the assertion that the entire shock resistance is wiped out at the impact of the first bullet, even when that bullet does not hit a vital spot, and we have the same condition, only magnified. The organs will live separately and independently for a correspondingly longer period. Here is another morsel of food for thought. Is it not possible that this fundamental truth is at the bottom of the sudden dropping off of the needle gun in the estimation of big-game hunters?

day, the men shouting full throated, the women shrilling ribald songs and clapping their hands in a cadenced orgy of syncopation. "On with the dance!" flung its eternal challenge against the encircling wall of the silent, crouching wilderness.

To the right and to the left small fires, economically nursed, shone through wisps of grass like monster glowworms, marking the camps of tracker and tent boy, servant, headman, porter, and common hanger-on. There was a little protective fire for the horse, Hawthorne, another one for his pal, Bertie, and, by an ironical fluke, even Keating, the ever-fattening goat, bought weeks before as lion bait, had been provided by his piccanin attendant with a defensive beacon which gleamed lonely from afar!

To arouse us from our revery, a report of five lions which had haunted a kraal for three consecutive nights came in, and on the next day we made a hard march, encountered a deluge of rain which wiped out all spoor, spent an uncomfortable night, and returned empty handed. In the afternoon Cass went out to his elephant. After passing several men, women, and children carrying elephant meat, he began to tally them and counted one

hundred and four in addition to those he had missed. In spite of this abundance, a great row developed later over the division of the spoils. I quote from Cass's journal:

Nothing left of carcass of elephant but bones and skull. Elephant meat from trunk for dinner chopped up with a little onion. Found very good, preferable to wildebeest and some other antelope. No game flavor and no particular taste. Hell of a row in camp. Cook got drunk and gave away nearly all the meat which was brought in yesterday. All the people dissatisfied. . . . Tusks measured 5 feet 5½ and 5 feet 4.

For the sake of its brevity I quote a later entry from the same source under date of October 20th:

Report of bull elephant spoor. Left camp 8.15. Reached edge of bush in one hour and found fresh spoor of two bulls. Entering, we saw bull inyala standing facing us forty to fifty yards for several seconds, not long enough to get photo, but very beautiful sight. After following elephants for several hours in very fickle wind they got our wind and ran away, but not for more than thirty or forty-five minutes. I finally heard one close by and tried to attract attention of G., who was in front, but could not, and when I reached him Madada had just seen elephant not far away. Bush thick and it took some time to determine which way he was facing. Tried my binoculars, and while they helped I could not see clearly its head. G. stepped out and shot, and then I shot. We both put two shots in head, G. in temple and ear just back of orifice and my shots in forehead high up and one lower by ten inches. Elephant never moved. He was twenty-eight paces from us when we shot. Very good tusks, but one broken and other splintered some on end. Very extensive bush. It took us one hour to reach edge on way back to camp, and two hours to arrive. Roll-call of porters, telling them about elephant meat, trophies, etc.

There are several points in the preceding paragraph which call for comment. One is the astonishing presence of the inyala many miles from any established inyala haunt, valuable evidence as to the increasing range of this rare beast. Another is that although he was within ten feet of me, Cass could not let me know that he had heard the elephant. Still another is the fact that he had to resort to his binoculars to get the outline of an animal eleven feet high standing at twenty-eight paces! The pause to determine which way the elephant was facing is an important note. As for myself, I was more curious as to the position of the second of the two elephants we had been spooring than as to that of the one at which I was about to shoot, for I hold firmly to the belief that most men killed by elephants are crushed by an onlooker. I know of no exceptions to the rule that an elephant, when genuinely frightened, will rush the way he is headed.

This elephant was evidently of great age. His forefeet measured sixty inches in circumference at the base, possibly a record for feet of all classes. His broken tusk, a mass of malformation of ivory and bone only a couple of feet long and split from end to end in some

century-old adventure, nevertheless weighed fifty pounds, and its mate, chipped at the end and still six feet six and a half inches in length, tipped the scales at eighty pounds of clean, live ivory, no mean prize in this day and generation. In one shoulder was an old wound, and a lead bullet was subsequently cut out which indicated a Kaffir gun of ancient design.

Individually I have taken only four elephants, all south of parallel 22 and each interesting for a special reason. The first, killed on the west bank of the Maputa, was an enormous, lone tusker carrying one hundred and thirty pounds of ivory in tusks measuring over six and seven feet, respectively, on the outer curve. He came out of the bush directly in front of me at twenty-eight paces, walking quietly, with head down. He was the first wild elephant I had ever seen and book knowledge told me that the proper frontal shot was at the very top of the cranium, but the elevation of the rifle when aimed at that mark was so startling that I simply could not believe the bullet would not glance. I lowered by two feet and fired. The bullet pierced the base of the trunk and the cavity in which it is set, slipped between the upper and lower rock-like teeth on the left side of the jaw, and

drilled its way to unknown depths in the left breast of the elephant. That shot is not recommended to other neophytes. It was made once and will never be made again. Had I aimed half an inch higher or lower the elephant would have been merely annoyed and would have rushed directly over me. As it was, the terrific shock sent him back on his haunches, and as he turned, I placed the second bullet in the region of the heart, finishing him.[1]

My second elephant was the poorest of the lot as to tusks, but the peculiar circumstances of his taking started a riot of discussion. Alone with Madada, who was at that time serving his apprenticeship, I had been spooring the bull for hours when suddenly the tracker came to a rigid stop, turned, grinned, and laid his cheek in his hand, the gesture which in sign language means sleep. We were walled in by the thick bush and I had difficulty in passing him. Not ten paces away lay the elephant, with his tusks pointing toward me and in such a position that I could get no shot at heart, brain, or spine. As it was impossible to move one foot to either side on

[1] This skull is in the possession of the American Museum of Natural History, where it can be examined.

account of the impassable jungle, I made the best of a bad business, woke him with the right barrel of the .450 I was carrying, and luckily finished him with the left as he raised his head, exposing a temple.

Even while this rapid action took place I was worrying subconsciously over the hoary assertion that elephants never lie down. While Madada gloated over the prize and cut off the tail to carry back to camp, I examined every visible part of the carcass for signs of a previous wound. There were none. Throughout the morning we had been following the beast through all his peregrinations. He had fed, walked, and puddled normally and there had been no sign of blood or bowel trouble in his droppings. As soon as Edy arrived, I asked Madada if he saw anything to indicate that the elephant was a sick one, and he replied in the negative.

For a moment on the way back to camp I debated quizzically with myself whether to keep silence on the fact of having come upon an elephant lying down, but only for a moment, for even at that time I had learned that Africa keeps no secrets. There are no depths in its wilderness where a man can bury any action, however trivial, against the memory

and mania of the native for stark narration. "Here is where the white man did thus and so." You establish the year, then the expedition, then the person, and sometimes find yourself in possession of a ten-year-old secret which blackens forever the reputation of some luminary of polite drawing-rooms ten thousand miles away.

The impulse to keep quiet about what I thought to be the first elephant ever found lying down did not arise from shameful motives, however, but from a natural instinct to avoid ridicule. Second thoughts showed the incident in its true scientific proportions and immediately upon arriving in camp I told my companion, Dr. Pinto Coelho, the whole truth. He was a sportsman of long and varied experience, and promptly called an *indaba* of all the oldest hunters in the district. They asserted that elephants sometimes lie down. We returned to Delagôa Bay with the news and my friend, Mr. A. T. Long, took it upon himself to put the case to Major J. Stevenson-Hamilton, who came back with a letter to the effect that "Chamberlain must have killed somebody else's elephant, as elephants never lie down." For days every time elephants were mentioned I had to pay for a round of

drinks, and I would have been ruined had not James Sutherland's book came to the rescue. Sutherland was a professional hunter who even at that time had something like five hundred elephants to his credit. He exploded forever the myth that they do not lie down.

My third tusker was remarkable for the longest and most anxious wait I ever had for a shot. He was standing at a quartering angle to me, only nineteen paces away, so near that it seemed he must hear my heart beat. I was in thick bush, but would not have dared move in any case. I had determined to try a shot mentioned in no books at the bulge midway between the temple and the center of the forehead, as both those vital spots were inaccessible from my position. What made me wait was a second bull with smaller tusks that stood a few yards behind the first, facing directly toward me. After three minutes that seemed like three centuries he reached up his trunk and tore a great limb from the big tree under which both elephants were standing. When the limb fell he turned slightly to avoid it. Immediately I fired, dropping the first bull in his tracks, and threw myself headlong as his companion crashed madly through the bush just behind me.

During many shooting trips extending over a period of ten years I have had occasion to observe elephant in the Villanculos district, on both banks of the Maputa, and in the various elephant bushes of the Panda country; I have also had creditable reports on them in the Gijà district and the country immediately south of the Zambezi River, as well as on the Rovuma, and I confidently believe that there are more elephants in Portuguese East Africa to-day than there were a decade ago.

Any census of these roving beasts is impossible, but every man is free to make estimates based on his personal observation. In my judgment an extremely conservative estimate would give the Maputa region, 150; Panda, 100; Gijà, 100; Villanculos, 30; the Buzi Company, 50; the Mozambique Company, 200; the Rovuma (by annual immigration), 100; making a sum total of 730. Compare these figures with the statement made by my friend, Mr. Herbert Lang, of the American Museum of Natural History, in that organization's *Journal* for September-October, 1922:

> Giraffes also have been subject to ruthless destruction in Nubia and especially in South Africa, and the elephant, due to the value of ivory, is now extinct in many quarters and found in numbers *only on the eastern and northeastern borders of the great equatorial rain forest.* (The italics are mine.)

When I was in the Buzi Company's holdings many years ago it was employing a band of trained native hunters to take all ivory of every size for export and also with the object of keeping the elephants away from agricultural districts. The Mozambique Company, with vast territories under its jurisdiction, is bound to inaugurate the same policy soon, if it has not already done so. Before long the mandate will go forth to kill elephants whether they have any tusks or not, females and young, and let it be noted that the massacre will not lie at the door of the sportsman.

Just here it is permissible to refer to the statement made in the preface of this book as to the only practicable method of preserving the great, marauding mammals of Africa to future generations. As stated, the expenses and economic loss involved in securing sufficient country for the conservation of samples of all species of this class are enormous; but I wish to go on record with a proposition of great scope and far-reaching value which today is feasible and in the near to-morrow will be barred by its rapidly increasing cost. Look at the map. Note the narrow tongue of land bounded on the south by the Natal border

and on the west by the Maputa River. It contains less than a million acres, approximately a hundred elephants, and not over a dozen settlers to-day.

This large herd of elephants has never been known to cross the Maputa River and its members even show a different development of tusks to those of the elephants just across that river. It is reasonable to believe that a thirty mile barrier built between the ocean and the Maputa River near the Natal border would be the only measure necessary to confine and preserve the entire herd.

Look at the map again, draw a fifty-mile line from northwest of Panda to a point ten miles northwest of Chicome, take a twenty-mile strip on each side of that line. The rectangle will comprise 1,280,000 acres and include the natural haunts of elephant, inyala, kudu, bushbuck, sable, waterbuck, wildebeest, eland, and reedbuck, to say nothing of lesser game. Up to this writing not over twenty bona-fide settlers have holdings within it.

There is no adequate reason for demanding that the Portuguese government carry the entire burden and loss which would be incurred in barring these two areas for all time against the advance of colonization for the

benefit of naturalists and the rest of the world, but there is every reason why the rest of the world should come to some arrangement with Portugal to that end. The expenses of acquisition of unoccupied state lands would be less than those of indemnification to the scattered owners of holdings and both together less than the cost of upkeep in the course of time; and, knowing as I do the great liberality of the Portuguese in such matters, I venture the further assertion that the amount of endowment necessary to put through this scheme, if the enterprise is undertaken at once, would be astonishingly small.[1]

Returning to the great bull whose fall gave rise to this long digression, many people do not know that an elephant's tusks are set from two to three feet deep in a cushion of spongy bone. For the same length from the base they are penetrated by a nerve such as we have in our teeth and which tapers to a fine point. Outward from that point (which occurs about the line where the tusk becomes visible on a live elephant) the ivory is solid. There are two methods of extracting tusks. One is to sever the neck of the elephant and set the

[1]The native occupants of the district need not be disturbed nor subjected to any further restrictions than obtain at present.

skull with tusks pointing upward, having a care to keep them moist at the base. In time they will come free. The other is to chop them out, which requires hard and careful labor.

The feet of an elephant also make up into striking trophies, and should be severed at the belly line and stripped with only one cut at the back. The skin is an inch thick in spots and the meat and bones beneath the ankle joint have to be dug out piecemeal. Through his capacity as a natural slave driver Madada succeeded in taking the tusks, skinning the legs, and stripping the flesh from my elephant in one and a half days, a remarkable performance. It was October 22nd, a week short of the close of the shooting season, and only one objective remained to us, a spot called Old Chicome, which is supposed to reek with lions.

On this last night of syncopated pandemonium at Gumbo's there was no need to hold an *indaba* and no one reported for sick parade. The secretary bag, receptacle of toilet articles, housewife, pharmacopœia, and treasury, placed on the clean sand by my chair, remained closed. It contained every variety of trifle dear to the native heart and more wealth in actual cash—sheaves of banknotes,

bags of silver, and a small, clinking package of heavy gold—than any one of our followers could ever hope to amass. It had been carried by a slim youth at the head of the *safari*, often while we were away from the line of march for the entire day. It had lain unattended in camp for hour upon hour and sometimes through carelessness had been left out all night. In six weeks it had never been locked! Now it drew our eyes and our thoughts. Cass reached out a foot and kicked it.

"Do you think that's fair?" he asked.

For answer I told him the most poignant of the many stories of the great famine, how three miserable women porters, working for a despised Banyan trader of the backwoods, had been found lying across their loads of flour, dead of starvation, rather than steal of their master's goods. Of such clay are these Thongas formed, and I, for one, have no desire to see them remodeled according to our ideas of a higher civilization. I believe in trusting them to the full measure of their extraordinary honesty and self-command, and I glory in some of their differences from ourselves. Their dignity at all times and fortitude under suffering are unsurpassed and the beauty of their child life is a bright reflection of the

desire for happiness which starves in the hearts of us all.

The Thonga child plays in an Elysian field, resplendent against a somber background, knowing no worry, no responsibility, no reproof, no limitations. To us, freedom without a single reservation is practically inconceivable, and yet these children experience it daily from infancy to adolescence. It is as though they were granted an interim between birth and life. Their elders, lashed to the treadmill of mature existence with the thongs of ritual and a supernal cynicism, look upon all their tricks and tantrums with an unchanging smile. It is as though they said: "Play! Play! Be free. Sing to the lizard, dance before the toad, hug your little sweetheart, cry when it rains, and sleep when you are tired, for the hour is coming when you must put on the chains of life. The day of the rites of accretion to the tribe awaits you; then a space and base weakness will fall upon you and at last despicable age. Be happy now." To the grown Kaffir heaven is always behind. Is it any wonder that he smiles with a serene indulgence when he looks upon the age of joy?

Many slight and some basic changes have come to the Thongas even in the short period

I have known them. No longer do they leap to catch the falling butt of a cigar or treasure tin cans and empty bottles as the apple of their eye; no longer is the white man a thing apart, a mystery, or a parallel, walking in dignity and mutual respect on a separate way. Madada wears a hideous hat and coat, hiding the glistening suppleness of the naked body which used to slither before me, agile and smooth as a black snake.

Two forces of civilization, industrialism and Christianity, ominous in their diametric contradictions, are undermining the social foundations of the tribe, and it is impossible to predict whether the world-old tree of the Thonga nation will bend or break to the strain. At present it stands like a hoary oak, attacked on one side by the hatchet of the mission boy and on the other by the ax of the John boy, returning from the sinister atmosphere of the Rand. Perhaps its destiny is to come down, sound limbs and rotten, in a single crash, and what will eventually arise from the ruin no man can say.

CHAPTER XVI

BREAKING AWAY

Departure from Gumbo.—Four days of rain at Chicome.—More delays at Chai Chai.—The Fiat truck.—A flivver and ox carts to the rescue.—An encounter in the wilds.

WITH the killing of the second elephant our last excuse for hanging on at Gumbo's was gone and we plunged into the work of packing definitely and doctoring our trophies, wet and dry, for immediate transportation. The actual business of running a large *safari* smoothly is at no time easy, but it is the last few days of a long trip that put the executive to the severest test. The men and the population of the surrounding country are no longer hankering for meat, and while the rank and file is held by expectations of back pay and largess, the sources from which extra labor can be drawn suddenly dry up.

By hook and crook we managed to get all our goods to Chicome, at the head of the railway which runs from that point to the port of

Chai Chai, in five days. We ourselves made the journey with our hunters in two, and on the way met one of the couriers we had dispatched in search of supplies, accompanied by a woman porter carrying a load of delicacies. At Chicome we were warmly welcomed by Mr. Maudsley Baynes, who was in charge of one of the model main stations of the W. N. L. A.

On the following day we paid off all carriers and, keeping only the four trackers, moved to Old Chicome in search of lion. Baynes went with us, and on the road out we borrowed an old donkey and a sheep as supplements to Keating in the way of bait. By the calendar we still had five days of the shooting season, but the heavens decreed otherwise. For hour after hour and day after day the rain came down in sheets, and if there is anything more depressing than a camp on a rainy day, I have yet to find it. The sheep was the only one of our bait animals taken, and that by a hyena.

The luck which had attended us without a break from the day we left London now made its final exit. We caught the weekly train to Chai Chai and had a good laugh over the news that Mohamet, the supercilious laggard, had missed it; but subsequently trouble after

trouble beset us. Our hosts at Chai Chai, Mr. Torre do Val and his charming wife, had to put up with us for much longer than any of us had expected, owing to the inexplicable delay of the usual steamer. They did it with a good grace and hospitable warmth until finally word came through to the effect that both the boats on the Chai Chai run were out of commission, one through running on the rocks and the other with a burst boiler. There was nothing for it but to make a dash overland to the railhead at Xinovane *via* Gijà, a journey of some one hundred and fifty miles.

Being natural-born optimists, we set out to do this trek in eight hours, pinning our faith on a big Fiat truck which the World War had left stranded in Chai Chai. We started on Wednesday before dawn and the bi-weekly train from Xinovane was scheduled to leave at 3 P.M. of the same day. Disillusionment set in immediately. The road was excellent, but the Fiat was not. By nine o'clock we knew that we had not a hope and dispatched a messenger to the nearest telegraph station with a wire to the Governor-General asking for a special train on the following day. By noon the town clerk of Chai Chai, who had offered his services as chauffeur, succumbed to ex-

haustion and a violent attack of fever, resigning the wheel to Cass.

Throughout the agony of the long day the Fiat never got into high and never did a mile without boiling. Edy and Jack rustled water and cranked until they also were done up; from then on until sunset I did the cranking. Dark caught us in the midst of a vast plain, and the engine, instead of picking up in the cool of the evening as we had hoped it would do, quit cold. That night marked low ebb in our spirits, but at dawn a convoy of ox carts came squeaking along, and I returned with the half-breed in charge to a village on the banks of the Limpopo, where I was making poor headway in commandeering the carts when a strange sight met my eyes. A Ford on a float was being pushed across the wide river by half a dozen naked Africans.

The owner of the flivver, however, was a white man and a gentleman. His arguments added to mine procured the services of the ox carts for our heavy luggage and tusks and he himself turned around and drove us thirty miles to Gijà. There the Administrator informed us that the country between his post and railhead at Xinovane was in flood and no motor car of any avail. He supplied us with

fresh oxen and horses and we finally completed in three and a half days the journey we had set out to do in eight hours.

One episode of the final stretch stands out above all others. It was an encounter, while we were still deep in the wilds, with a great *safari*. Porter after porter met us, burdened with everything from a theodolite to a monster tin bathtub. With each load our curiosity and the respect of our men arose to a higher and higher pitch. At last came a break in the long line, and then a lone white man, riding a fine bay gelding. He was helmeted and coatless and was calmly studying an open notebook spread on his left hand, while his right held a pencil poised in air. Only when he and I were abreast did he look up. We nodded formally, started to pass, checked our horses, stared at each other, smiled, and then grinned.

"I know you."

"And I you!"

"Let me see. Bridge. I lost five pounds to you at bridge in 1913."

"Take it off the fifty-five you owe me at stud."

"Captain Rocha, surveyor of forgotten boundaries."

"That's right. And you're Chamberlain.

There's a special train waiting at railhead—been there two days—but they couldn't tell me who it was for. Better hurry, as the crew is starving."

His words were like a blast from outside, a cold draft, a "stepmother's breath," a call back to home and duty, labor and pelf. He was going in and we were coming out, but each of us in his appointed way was headed for chains and the Day's Work.

APPENDIX

IT may be of use to the practical sportsman to know the exact details of our outfit on this trip. The following notes apply strictly to conditions in Portuguese East Africa, though many of the suggestions offered would be of equal value in any other semi-tropical region. The remarks on language hold good only for the six tribes of the Thonga nation or, roughly speaking, the Provincial districts of Lourenço Marques and Inyambane.

1. *Clothing.*—I have never been able to understand how Selous could be comfortable in his costume of hat, shirt, and nothing else. As far as I am concerned the irreducible minimum for field work is comprised of the following articles: hat, shirt, breeches, socks, and boots which come high enough to cover two inches of the breeches' cuffs, thus eliminating puttees. The hat should be of dark felt, with a rim narrow or stiff enough not to flap in the wind. I never use a helmet when in the field. Three khaki shirts are enough, and three pairs of washable breeches, the darker the khaki the

better. No single spot of white should be worn or carried; even the white face of a wrist watch is dangerous. Shirt and breeches should be washed after every day of use, thus doing away with the need for underwear. Half a dozen pair of socks, every man to his taste. I use thin cotton. The boots should be strong but light. Mine are the ordinary American skating boot, carried four inches higher on the calf than is usual and laced tight on the foot as well as the leg. The soles are only five-sixteenths of an inch thick and seem to have turned to iron. After four hard trips and many shorter ones, they show no sign of a hole. Summary of one man's field clothing necessary for eight weeks' shooting:

1 felt hat.
3 khaki shirts.
3 khaki breeches.
6 khaki handkerchiefs.
6 pairs socks.
2 pairs boots.

Many people think of all of Africa as a furnace, but I know of no more piercing cold than is to be encountered just south of the tropics. It does not force down the thermometer, but it is capable of drilling through two woolen blankets, an ulster, a bathrobe, pajamas, and

a full suit of Jäeger underwear, supplemented by bedsocks and hat! I once put on all those things just within the tropics at sea level and was still too cold to sleep. Leaving out the usual clothing necessary for steamer travel and social occasions which can be stored at the coast, each hunter should be equipped with the following:

1 full suit of heavy tweeds.
1 Norfolk jacket with copious pockets.
1 pith helmet.
3 soft shirts with roll collar (white).
3 suits light underwear.
1 suit heavy woolen underwear.
2 suits pajamas.
2 pairs woolen stockings.
3 bath towels, medium size.
1 pair mosquito boots which slip on easily and come to calf of leg (very light).
1 rain coat.
1 heavy ulster.

2. *Bedding for one person.*—Two 7 x 9 first-quality Jäeger woolen blankets; three white pillow slips; no sheets; one thick steamer rug as mattress; one fair-sized pillow.

3. *Camp equipment for two men.*—It is seldom that one comes upon a complicated appliance so perfect as to defy criticism or improve-

ment, but I unhesitatingly make this claim for the Selwyn model of the A tent made by Benjamin Edgington of London. The original A tent with a floor space of 8 x 10 would sleep only one person. Its great advantage was that it did away with all uprights by sliding thin poles through seams on the four laterals. I suggested to W. M. S. Selwyn that a three-foot wall tent could be made on the same supporting skeleton. The resulting tent can be seen among the illustrations. Floor, walls, and top are in one continuous piece of green, rot-proof canvas. It sleeps two people, with ample room left for a table and chairs. There is no upright pole. Including the sectional slip poles, which are only an inch and a quarter in diameter, it makes a load for two men. With it should be bought a fly three feet longer than the ridge of the tent, a collapsible canvas bath and wash basin, using the same standard; two long extension hammock chairs and two folding stools (all these of rot-proof canvas), two strong army cots and one roll-up, collapsing table. No ridgepole is needed except when the fly is in use. Cass and I took two of these tents. When we were together we used one for sleeping quarters and the other for gun room, storage, etc.

Every article listed up to this point should be bought, for safety's sake, before departure for Africa, but from now on, with the exception of batteries and ammunition, nothing will be mentioned which cannot be purchased in Lourenço Marques or Beira.

For cooking utensils take your cook to the store and buy exactly what he picks out, and nothing more. In addition get two large galvanized buckets; one short-handled ax; six common kitchen skinning knives of *soft* steel; a case of bar washing soap; six dish towels; three tablecloths; six napkins; six each of white-metal table knives, forks, teaspoons, soup spoons, thick drinking tumblers, serviceable china dinner plates, soup plates, cups and saucers; six Dietz storm lanterns; two electric torches with spare batteries; two thirty-two-hour electric lamps with extra battery each; one roll of copper wire; one small saw; one solid, honest-to-God deal kitchen table about 30 x 48 inches. (Do not worry about the bulk. Upside down on a Kaffir's head it makes a fine catch-all for light articles, and when on its four feet in camp it is a godsend.) One hank quarter-inch rope of good quality; two large canvas bags with turn-cocks for cooling water; one filter; a warm blanket for each

personal attendant and khaki clothes for all servants except the cook.

4. *Supplies for two persons.*—Ten pounds of tobacco in packages for native use and a corresponding amount of cigarette papers; two rolls toilet paper. One case potatoes; thirty pounds best quality rice; forty pounds common salt; one case onions; three gallons kerosene oil in quart bottles tightly corked; one case whisky; six half quarts champagne; twenty pounds sugar; two tins Cerebos salt; one bottle pepper; two bottles vinegar; one bottle olive oil; one large boiled ham; one side of bacon; twenty pounds flour; three bottles mixed pickles; six bottles Rose's zetril (lime juice); twenty pounds prunes; two bottles A1 or any other sauce. At the point of departure for the interior should be purchased a carefully made selection of piece cloths, beads, and other trifles dear to the native heart in that particular section.

Now we come to the trickiest trick of provisioning—the weekly box forming a one-boy load. For every week two persons expect to be away, add one box, each containing the following articles:

Half-pound packet of your favorite tea.

3 tins butter-biscuits unsweetened.

2 tins cherries.
1 " peaches.
4 " Boston baked beans. (Make it 6 if you can—each a royal lunch.)
4 " Portuguese green beans.
1 " Portuguese green peas No. 1.
7 Lazenby's soup squares, assorted.
2 two-pound jars orange marmalade.
1 ham loaf.
3 tins luncheon cheese.
1 one-pound glass jar fresh butter salted.
1 dozen tins Norwegian sardines.
1 one-pound tin beef dripping.
1 700-gram tin fish oil.
1 packet containing 1 dozen boxes safety matches.
3 tins Ideal milk.
4 packets (large cakes) sweet chocolate.

The American is apt to jeer at the tea and the orange marmalade, so lest he substitute coffee or cocoa for tea and leave out the marmalade, let it be said that tea is an absolute life saver in the tropics and marmalade a boon to the suddenly sugar-craving palate. The first thing one does after terrible hours of thirst (Cass and I frequently covered thirty miles in a broiling sun between morning and evening) is to drink from one to five cups of

hot clear tea; then the bath and *then* one whisky and cool water. Start with the last at the peril of your comfort and health.

5. *Money.*—A bank letter of credit to Lourenço Marques or Beira, and there buy small currency of the country according to local conditions. Only careful inquiry at the time of starting will inform you of what is passing current in the region into which you are going. We collected two stockingfuls of English small silver with great trouble, and used none of it, as our loss would have been enormous owing to exchange conditions and the low value of official paper money.

6. *Pharmacopœia.*—After many years' experience I have reduced my medicine chest to the following: one pint iodine; quarter pound of quinine hydrochloride, with capsules to match; one hundred three-grain tablets cascara sagrada; one quart castor oil; one hundred black-demon bowel rousers (the last to be given two at a time to the natives); half a dozen two-inch bandages (twenty yards) in assorted colors, white, pink and blue; two ounces permanganate crystals.

Certain remarks are in order. Eliminate constipation and malaria from both white

man and black in the Thonga country and you have wiped out ninety-nine out of one hundred pathological casualties. Dose for a native: three times what you would give white of equal age. The six bottles of champagne listed under supplies should really be included here. They are for white consumption in case of fever and highly necessary. As to the pink and blue bandages—a porter once came to me with a terrible running ulcer on the calf of his leg, which he could hardly drag. A glance was enough to tell me he was not malingering, even though I know nothing about ulcers. I ordered out the colored bandages and asked him fifty questions, each more grave than its predecessor, and finally with great solemnity I cut two pieces from the blue roll. One was bound around the man's sore leg, the other tied around his arm. I told him he would feel no pain until they rotted off. He grinned, walked away without a limp, and for the five remaining days of the trip led the entire *safari*. You need not believe this case. Frankly, I would not believe it had I not seen it with my own eyes. But whether you believe it or not, remember it. I do not carry the cumbersome modern serum apparatus for combating snake bites, for the same

reason that I do not have myself equipped with an individual lightning-rod. In all my years in Africa only one acquaintance was bitten by a snake, and he stepped on it as he got out of bed in his own house.

7. *Batteries.*—I have no intention of going into a disquisition on this moot subject. Cass carried a double-barreled .470 cordite gun by Rigby for elephant, a .350 double-barreled Rigby Magnum fitted with telescope sight for general shooting, and a Savage 250/3000 which jammed at a crucial moment and was never used thereafter. I carried a double-barreled .470 elephant gun by Churchill (which jammed at the breech in spite of having been sent back to the shop twice while we were in London for correction); a Westley Richards .318 Accelerated Express magazine rifle for general field use, and a 6.5 millimeter Mannlicher-Shoenauer. I have since rid myself of this entire battery.

I have had letters accusing me of a lack of patriotism in not using American guns, and out of fairness to myself and our manufacturers I wish to sum up my position, which is the stand taken by almost every sportsman of repute in Africa. The American gun is the

best value for the money to be had anywhere. It has a legitimate and enormous market among people who are not risking their lives and who do not care for a hand-made highly finished article. Its limitations lie in its standardization. The overwhelming weight of experience teaches that it is not the first choice for a weapon to be used against elephant, buffalo, or lion. The difference between it and the best English rifles, made by hand, fitted to order, and sighted to the user's taste on the butts, is the usual difference between one hundred dollars and five hundred dollars when the money is honestly earned. Cass paid £125 for his .470; I was falsely economical and paid £40 for mine; his proved to be worth exactly £85 more than mine. We each had with us a twelve-bore shotgun. One should not take a fancy shotgun, but any solid, serviceable weapon that can be left around carelessly and handy.

8. *Ballistics and Ammunition per individual.* —After picking your rifles with due regard for the fact that the needle gun has collapsed in the estimation of experienced big-game hunters, buy shells as listed below, taking the highest charge and heaviest bullet recommended by the maker even at the sacrifice of

reach and flat trajectory. Have made a water-tight ammunition box of one-inch pine, 18″ x 9″ x 9″, and pack into it all it will hold, carrying the overflow, if any, separately. In my opinion it is not necessary nor advisable to have each packet sealed and soldered in tin for, should the goods be packed on a damp day, moisture is apt to gather inside the tins. The following list covers *ample ammunition* for a five-weeks' amateur shoot in Portuguese East Africa.

40 rounds of solids for elephant gun.

10 rounds of softs for elephant gun.

300 rounds of softs for general field gun.

40 rounds of solids for general field gun.

200 rounds of softs for small-caliber rifle if included in battery.

100 rounds of solids for small-caliber rifle for geese, guinea fowl, etc.

50 rounds of No. 6 shot for twelve-bore shotgun.

50 rounds of S. S. G. shot (or B. B.) for twelve-bore shotgun.

The skin of the first small buck killed should be stretched when freshly flayed, hair out, over the lid of the ammunition box, with a flap all around. It will dry tight and shed any downpour of rain. Care should be taken to keep

all ammunition in the shade whenever possible. Failure to do this ruined my shooting for ten days, as the powder became erratic in its explosion.

9. *Trophy preservation.*—I used to carry arsenic around in three-pound tins. I do it no more. I have stopped a native on the point of using the lid of one of the cans for a drinking cup; I have found one of the tins hobnobbing with a like tin of first-quality rice in the cook's box, and another spilled on the floor of my store room. I no longer carry arsenic. I use only common salt—the commoner the better—and some of my trophies so cured have lain around in a woodshed for eighteen months without suffering the slightest deterioration. I recommend plain salt, well rubbed in, and slow drying *in the shade* (also in the open) as an excellent system in dry weather. In rainy weather, send for arsenic or get your spoils as quickly as possible to a liberal bath in turpentine, to which should be added a gill of carbolic acid for every two gallons of turpentine.

10. *Language.*—Equipped with two dozen words and phrases, any man can shoot in the Thonga country without an interpreter. Here they are; accent invariably on the penulti-

mate syllable, pronounce the a's broad and give the i the Latin value, as in Christine except when it is part of the diphthongs *ai* and *oi*, pronounced as written:

hamba—get a move on, go, walk.

tutuma—trot or, it trots (according to inflection.)

baleka—run, gallop or, it runs.

caia—home, camp.

hamba lapa caia—go home.

cule—far; *cule?*—is it far?

cule mculo—very far.

buisa—come here or fetch it.

mati—water.

mati moto—hot water.

chocula—food. (Yell it when you are hungry.)

madoda—male, bull.

madoda mculo—big bull.

le mafazi—female. (Don't shoot.)

le hanshi—the horse.

moia—wind.

aicona—any negative or refusal; no.

mushle (mooshly)—good.

moia aicona mushle—wind no good.

aicona madoda—it is not a bull.

chahile!—wounded; hit.

chahile staleka—hard hit.

mculo—big.

muti—people or village. (You aim at an indistinct moving black object. Your tracker says, "*Muti!*" Don't shoot. You are aiming at a person, or, more likely, a pot carried on the head of an unseen woman.)

tula—shut up.

shibamo—gun.

mulungo—white man.

le boy—a native.

I do not vouch for the grammatical accuracy of the above, but I do guarantee that the phrases listed will not only work, but, with the assistance of inflection and gesture, will meet every need, principally because the Thonga is highly intelligent. Let not his language be judged by the samples given, because it is in reality an idiom of intricacy and beauty. Just to show you:

tira—to work.

-ela—(reflective suffix) for or on behalf of.

-isa—(causative suffix) to cause.

-ana—(reciprocal suffix) for each other.

Hence:

tira—to work.

tirela—to work for.

tirelisa—to cause to work for.

tirelisana—to cause to work for each other.

One more example:
cala—begin.
-ula—reversive suffix.
Hence:
caula—to end, to finish.

CAULA

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